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The life of a star

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THE LIFE OF A STAR

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THE LIFE OF A STAR

BY

Mrs. CLARA (MORRIS) Harriott

AUTHOR OF
LIFE ON THE STAGE

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THE LIFE OF A STAR

I

AN ACTRESS ON GUARD

WHEN a young actress struggling for the highest place attains it; when she has made a great and sudden success in a part, and the play is settling into its stride for a long run, people suppose her position is settled and secure for years to come. They imagine her triumphant, free from care or anxiety of any kind, sinking to rest, wrapped, as it were, in clouds of glory, only to arise to delicate feeding and deep draughts from cups of praise; for, you see, she has made a great hit; the struggle is past and she has nothing now to fear, they think. And right here I should like to carol a few light notes of incredulity—*tra-la-la!* Because in one case, at least, it was all so different; and I know, oh, yes, I know quite well—for see now, there were two special nights, and on one, at eight o'clock, a girl, wide-eyed, poorly dressed, just out of the great West, and absolutely without one friend in it, faced New York City in chill terror. The next night, at eight o'clock, the same girl faced pleased recognition in a myriad of beaming eyes; a forest of outstretched hands and a sea-like roar of welcome that shook her to the heart. I know, because I was that girl.

Well, that was success—unadulterated, amazing success; and for a little time I rested upon it, content, happy, and very grateful—but not dazzled, not

caught up in golden clouds, not overpowered as by a miracle. And I noticed the odd looks that were turned upon me after curtain calls, overheard comments as to the "easiness" with which I took this success, and as to my awful lack of appreciation, cold bloodedness, etc. And while they wondered at me, so I wondered at them; for in my verdant young ignorance this was my true thought: Why do they make such a to-do over this? I acted in Cleveland and in Cincinnati, and did my best, and people cried and gave me calls; and here I have a good part, and do my best, and the people forgive the burr in my speech, and cry, and applaud. What's the difference? I see nothing so wonderful! Oh, dear heaven! Oh, loyal and woolly little Westerner! Yet that was my true thought.

Then one day one high in the journalistic world sent me an enormous number of papers from far and wide, from Canada to Florida, from east to west, and lo! each and every one of them had reprinted at a column's length, each of the New York papers' expressed opinion of the Western actress's debut in the metropolis. Many had editorial comment as well, and then, indeed, my calm was shaken. A great awe crept over me. Well I knew I was of no interest to all the readers these papers represented. It was New York, the great, the powerful, the nerve-centre of this whole broad land, and New York's opinion, that interested the entire country. Had the metropolis gibed at me, contemptuous laughter at my ludicrous presumption would have run north, south, and west

like the crackling of thorns in the fire. My knees trembled at the thought. My simple trust in my own honest best was gone. All my careful study in trying to make one scene seem the logical outcome of another seemed wasted. I had suddenly been lifted high into popularity by the whim of the first city in the land—powerful, brilliant, changeable. Ah, there was the rub—*changeable!* I had sprung up in a single night. What had happened once might easily happen again. I knew no more of security. From that moment I began to peer into the future, watching for the woman there just out of sight who waited for my shoes; and I straightway resolved never to be dragged down from the high place that had been given me, but at the first sign of frown or weariness to descend at once, without tear or remonstrance, showing only gratitude for what had been. And there and then began that interminable chain of prayers with which I wearied heaven, that I might be prepared; that when my successor came I might feel no resentment, no bitterness, no rancour. And to show how near this came to being a fixed idea with me,—as for the first time in my life I had weeks without rehearsals,—I at once took up certain studies, under teachers, that when my place was taken by another, widened and varied interests might lessen the chance of heartbreak. Having then got around to the viewpoint of the ladies of the company, I tried to show them my new appreciation of the marvel of my success, here in their city, and they seemed much gratified. One evening, as we waited in the greenroom,

the conversation turned upon the many prominent actors and actresses New York had—to use the green-room vocabulary—"sat down upon." Someone named Eliza Logan, who had been held as one of the greatest actresses of her time, but her disastrous appearance here, at her husband's theatre, was said to have broken her heart.

"Ah, but she was so ugly to look at!" said one of the older ladies. "Something very near genius, but, Lord, how ugly!"

"Well," I said, "there was Miss Julia Dean," and was roughly interrupted by the one person in the company who was systematically unkind to me with: "You know nothing of Julia Dean!"

"Of course I do not know her personally," I answered, "but through Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Ellsler and Mr. Owens I have heard of her delicate, fair beauty."

"She was the loveliest woman on the face of God's earth!" came in aggressive second interruption.

And then a calm, slow voice from the far end of the room was saying: "It's your careful moderation of speech, old man, that always appeals to my Bostonian training. A tender reticence in these days——" and the rest was drowned in general laughter.

"But could she act, your beautiful Julia Dean?" called out the deer-eyed Dietz.

And in chorus came: "No!"—"No!"—"A little!"—"Not a bit!" While my "Oh, yes she

could!" tumbling out the last of all, I went on: "Of course, her beauty counted highest in her success elsewhere, and the goodness that people say seemed to emanate from her like perfume from a flower. And she could act, too, with grace and dignity and sweetness such parts as *Julia* and *Parthenia* and the younger Shakespearean heroines! But," I sighed. ("But?" came back the chorus with every head ashake.) "But it's queer," I continued, "Miss Logan had genius, and she was rejected. Miss Dean had beauty, and she, too, was rejected. It's hard to guess what New York wanted!"

"Oh, no; that's easy!" cried my foe, and with a bitter sneer added, "She was waiting for *you,* my dear!"

I laughed quickly to hide my hurt, and answered: "Ah, yes! I see. You mean that, having neither beauty nor genius, I stand between the two, a living fountain of regretful tears, and as such arouse the attention even of New York?"

As everyone knew mine had been a success of tears, a shout of laughter broke forth that was like balm to my hurt. The thrust had been meant to wound, and I want to say for myself that if, as people used laughingly to declare, I, like some others, went through life with a rapier of mockery ever in hand, at least I never failed to keep the saving button of good nature firmly attached and made no thrust with a naked point.

The season was getting on to its last quarter. I was still safe, but one day, as I swept the horizon with

the great glass of anticipation, I believed my rival had come into view.

She hailed from England, and I closed my eyes as I thought how great must be her ability and value to be thus sent for across the ocean. I heard that she was blond—artificial or natural deponent saith not, —and verily I bowed my head, for unseen blonds are always fascinating.

Now, my prayers had gone steadily on all this time, and though their sincerity was beyond doubt, there had been a somewhat marked compactness and brevity about them until the golden-haired dramatic wonder had set sail to conquer New York and thrust her rosy toes into my shoes, when they suffered a sudden expansion of explanations, of entreaties, of promises, of iterations that might well have won for me a thump on the head from an aërolite; and while I was still desperately preparing for the worst, she came.

The bills were up. Mr. Daly read advance notices, and summoned the French prompter. A French prompter for an English-speaking company was one of Mr. Daly's unappreciated jests, for if any actor "stuck for the word" he stayed stuck till the curtain fell, or the season closed, or he died, or something, because the French prompter couldn't follow the MS., or if he did he couldn't pronounce the needed word. Well, he summoned the prompter, and charged him to be careful about ringing the curtain correctly, as he, Mr. Daly, would be over at the other theatre.

I turned cold, my shoes seemed to loosen on my feet, the actors' eyes went through me like skewers, and then the awful night was half over! Our house was large, but I had to goad myself along to keep up to the standard demanded—and then Mr. Daly came back. His lips were drawn down contemptuously. Mrs. Gilbert met him, and seemingly questioned him. He waved his hand as if dismissing something, and giving a short laugh came on to me.

I said faintly: "You are back early, sir?"

"Not early enough, though!" he snapped.

"You were disappointed?" I asked surprisedly.

He gave me a quick, sharp glance. "Damnably!" he answered briefly. "She's a sort of dramatic bolster—smother-voiced—shapeless—characterless!"

"But—but," I almost whispered, "she is blond."

"Well, good Lord! you can't make an actress out of a wisp of hair, can you?" I smiled a little. I knew tears were rising to my eyes, and I turned away. But he took me by the chin and turning my face back to him, looked at me a moment; then with a mocking laugh he said: "You are a sharp young piece, but——" He ran his little finger up and down my nose, "but this seems all right—not disjointed yet, eh?" I seemed to be whirling round and round. I caught for a moment at the managerial arm, and held tight, and he said quite gently and kindly: "What a little fool you are! There's your cue!" And for the time I was safe! Yet never did I cease my silent watch for the unknown woman, beautiful and gifted, who was coming, slowly or swiftly I knew not, but surely

coming, to say to me: "Your shoes, please. I am the new choice of the city," and I should answer: "With pleasure," even if I choked blue-black in the face over the gracious falsehood.

The second season was drawing to a close. I had played many parts and still held my place with the public, that especially after the burning of our home theatre had been so good, so very good to me, that I could have knelt down and bumped my forehead at its feet, after the Oriental fashion, in expression of my gratitude. We were rehearsing a new play. My fears were almost in a doze; only now and then I swept the distant horizon for a sign, and contentedly putting down my glass one day, lo! I ran straight against her on our own stage—the creature in whom we all saw my probable successor.

That later happenings may be better understood I must explain here that, in one way from first to last, I was ever the cause of travail of spirit, of anxiety, distress, and anger to Mr. Daly; and though I was sorry from my very heart, I could in no wise help him or myself for not being foreign-born, or foreign-trained. I could only act at night, within the magic fiery circle of foot and border lights; and to his orders, to his entreaties that I should act a scene at rehearsal, with those guying brother-and-sister fiends of mine sitting about, "laying for me," I could only beg, explain and finally declare: "You must either trust me or dismiss me, sir. I can die, but I can't act in daylight!"

After his delight in the mad scene of "Article 47," which had never once been rehearsed in full, he

vowed he would always trust to the faint indications of the rehearsed scene. But, alas, as soon as a new part was in hand his fears returned, his anger rose, my tears fell, and the old battle was on again.

"Madeline Morel" called for a long cast. Every gentleman in the company with, I think, one exception, was in it, and all the ladies as well, and among us a funny thing happened. Mrs. Gilbert had a mere scrap of a part—a peasant woman—and when the time came she played it with such a wealth of detail and such skill that it loomed up a real character study. Still the part was a scrap, and Mrs. Gilbert—did not like it. Miss Fanny Morant, whom both Mr. Wallack and Mr. Daly considered the best player of great ladies then on the stage, had a very important French, grande-dame, mother part, but she—did not like it. Miss Fanny Davenport had a part that might have been written for her to star in: French actress, gorgeous costumes, no morals to speak of, but a dazzling wit and a good heart. Heavens! you could fairly hear the applause as you read it, and she cried loudly she—did not like it. Miss Sara Jewett had a part, a stainless, lovely, convent-bred girl, striving to aid the stricken heroine, and she—did not like it. And I, the subdued, the silent, I read over the part of *Madeline*. Her character was not sharply drawn, was wobbly, uncertain, illogical. Well, open confession is ever good for the soul, and, by gracious, *I said I didn't like my part either!* A long-faced dark-browed group we were, when, creeping like a snail, the generally quick-moving, dapper Jimmy

Lewis came in, paler than ever, his small face puckered as if frost-bitten. I asked:

"What's the matter, Jimmy? Sick?"

He glared at me, held out a roll of MS. and said: "Sick? No! It's that d—— part! *I don't like it!*"

There was a lightning-like exchange of glances and then a wave of hysterical laughter surged through the room that drowned every complaint of every part, and we presently resorted to the stage to begin work, as pleasant-faced a crowd of actresses as any stage-manager could wish to meet; while Lewis, the non-comprehending, blinked helplessly, muttering: "Well, I'm hanged, if the whole gang hasn't gone crazy!"

One part required a special engagement. The character was that of a very young, only daughter of a noble house; pretty, spoiled, spirited, as well as spirituelle, and desperately in love with her *fiancé*. We had young people that were handsome, but they were too settled, too stolid, not in the least *mignonne*, and, although this part only lasted through one act, it was really very important. A young lady had been engaged, but she could not be present at the first rehearsal, so Mr. Daly proceeded to read her part. That was not an uncommon thing to do and had he confined himself to reading alone all had been well. But no, he must needs act the girlish passion, the pettish changeableness, and so placed the company upon the rack.

Mr. Crisp and I looked on in wicked joy, for we had been the last victims of his passion for arranging

and directing love scenes. Never shall I forget that last moment when we on the stage made love to Mr. Daly's shouted orders from the front of the house. Poor Crisp—a very good lover by the way—perspiring and red and mad, held me: "Oh, hold her closer!" cried Mr. Daly disgustedly. "Relax, Miss Morris, relax!"

"If I relax another bit," I groaned, "I shall go down flat on the floor! I can't relax any more and stand on my feet!"

"I don't want you to stand on your feet," came roaring back. "He should support you completely. Take her around the waist, man, and draw her to you, and—for God——'s sake, Crisp, what are you scratching her back like that for?"

It was the end. I dropped flat on the stage in helpless laughter, while Crisp dashed off into a dark place where he said—I have been told—many very reprehensible things, while the company held on to the scenery and laughed!

And now, oh now! here was this tall, gaunt, brown-moustached man, crowned with a shocking bad hat, casting his long arms about the shrinking shoulders of handsome George Clarke—matinée god and good fellow—who simply writhed under Mr. Daly's command to put more warmth into his work; and while we strove to keep our glee from breaking forth in sound, just when Clarke's ears were red enough to light matches, and Mr. Daly was doing his cooing, coquettish best, there broke upon the air a high and crackling laugh. We were aghast! Mr. Daly threw

up his head angrily: "What was that? Who did that?" he demanded looking about.

At a little distance, tall and stately, stood the gentle and reserved Charles Fisher, with wide, amazingly innocent blue eyes fixed upon him, as he answered composedly: "I did it, sir—I—that is—er, there are certain incongruities between the words, and—er your appearance, that are, well—er, that are infernally funny, sir."

We waited for the bolt—it never fell. There was a slight twitching of the managerial lips, but dignity carried him to the near end of the act. Clarke tried to walk aside, but our chief fiend, that crowned king-player of pranks, Louis James, was at his side in a flash, gravely and courteously commending Clarke's last effort, assuring him that the love scene with Daly was both tender and chaste.

The next day the newcomer was there, and before rehearsal was over I was conscious of danger, while everyone else was startled and amazed, for, you see, this young girl was about eighteen and looked even younger; a mere slip of a girl with a graceful, wand-like figure. Her *mignonne* face, with delicately modelled features, was lighted up with long-lashed hazel eyes. She had wavy, yellow-brown hair, and a dimple did the rest. A charming little empty-headed child she seemed, who chattered the whole morning through about the beauty of the wonderful wedding-gown she was to wear, and her hopes of being prettier than her bridesmaids, etc.

And then her act came on and we began to sit up

and take notice. Instead of merely reading her part with bright understanding, she indulged in little airs, graces and affectations; in tripping, mincing, and posing; and once when Mr. Daly said: "No, no, Miss V——! that is a trifle too knowing," she swiftly and cheerfully exclaimed, "Oh, do you think so? Well, perhaps a bit of the baby-stare manner?"—and instantly lowered her head slightly, arched her brows, and lifting rounded eyes, stared with the pretty blankness of a very young calf or a baby that has just emptied a bottle.

A man behind me exclaimed: "Good Lord! what nerve!" and the Boston-bred one standing alone near the bare wall took his hat off and bowed deeply and gravely. But when the love scene came, and she began to warm to her work; to bill and coo and gurgle; to cast her slender self about in lovely poses; to clasp her hands and roll her eyes; then it was that, figuratively speaking, Mr. Daly prostrated himself, with his brow in the dust, before the creature found at last, who could act at rehearsal, and let a man know what he was to expect at night. He was plainly enraptured. People looked curiously my way, and I smiled my self-defensive, try-to-look-pleasant smile, until my face ached from the strain.

Soon George Clarke—the champion lover of that day—began to find his occupation pretty nearly gone, this little maid insisting upon doing most of the love-making herself, wreathing her arms about his neck, clinging to his shoulder, or, as he viciously put it, "sagging" from his shoulder; but the thing that

most aggravated that manly actor was a little trick of throwing her arms about him bodily just above the elbows, thus holding him a helpless and, he felt, a ludicrous prisoner. And when, one day, Mr. Daly called out, "Embrace her, George! What's the matter that you stand there like a post? Embrace her!" "Well, I will," answered Clarke, with unfailing gentleness, but with murder in his eye. "I will if the lady lets go of my arms long enough to give me a chance," adding in a lower tone to the too, too ardent one: "Say, you'll make this a sort of 'catch-as-catch can' scene for me if you don't stop clipping my arms like that." And when the act ended he came off shooting his cuffs, straightening his coat and tie, and, turning his back to one of the gentlemen, with a petulant laugh asked: "Say, is that girl all off me yet? Just give me a brush-off to make sure." Ah, such are the trials of leading men!

As time went on we all saw Mr. Daly's growing interest and delight, and we all wondered what Miss V—— would not do when under the triple inspiration of lights, of music, and of audience. I took into account her Dresden-china beauty, her extreme youth, her remarkable *aplomb*, and loosened the latchets of my shoes, while quite unconsciously I fell into the habit of taking mental farewell of many things. So we all waited the new favourite, and only the Boston man, ever silent, smiled grimly and sometimes laughed with his face to the wall. And so, heavy of heart, I dressed for the first performance. The new-found little pearl of promise did not appear till late

in the evening. Everyone was on edge, at his or her best. The play moved steadily on in a rising crescendo of passion and grief. Clarke's love scene with me (I being sweetheart No. 1) had been beautifully tender and sincere. Louis James was at his smiling, polished best, showing all the implacable cruelty of the reformed rake, and our unequal but desperate struggle tightened spectators' nerves almost to the breaking point; and so prepared, the great farewell speech swept the house like a tornado. Always chary of allowing his people individual "calls," Mr. Daly shouted at last against the increasing applause "All right—take it, and be hanged to them!" And as I advanced, holding grateful hands out to the first spray as it were of that Niagara of applause, my heart contracted with the violence of physical pain. Something whispered maliciously, "Make the most of it—it may be the last. This time to-morrow night they may be waiting impatiently to greet with joyful cries the dainty loveliness, the youthful charm and brilliant acting of the yet unseen—the newcomer." In spite of all honest preparation tears must have rushed into my eyes, because I saw all the smiling crowd dimly as through a fog or mist, and in answer to some faint remonstrance from within I said: "But she will have no need of power of invective, of devouring rage. Her manager will select plays fitted to her powers, when once he hears the mighty city's choice." One moment I closed my eyes and swayed helplessly, for the draught of renunciation was very bitter in the swallowing, whatever sweetness might

follow later on. And then in a sort of woful gratitude, with pallid smiles I bowed myself away, and someone remarked in a low voice, "She's nigh to breakin' down," and another asked, "Overwork?" but the first made answer, "Naw, guess she's scared over that Cathedral scene, because——" and no more I heard, nor should have heard, had they shouted, for I was staring at a slender, graceful figure, whose trailing white satin glory and crown of orange blossoms alone told me who she was.

The lovely Sara Jewett passing by exclaimed, "Did you ever see such a mask of make-up?"

Ah, that was it! A cruel, extinguishing mask of unnecessarily heavy pastes, powders, paints, pomades! The delicate modelling of her small features was lost beneath it. In very truth the too intense white, red and black suggested at a distance a baby clown's face.

"My dear! my dear!" expostulated Miss Morant, "you have time in plenty. Run back and change your make-up. Your smooth child's face requires but a mere dust of powder and a touch of rouge. Run, make the change and be your fresh young self again!"

But she replied quite positively, "Oh, I couldn't think of such a thing! I'm made up by the French method, which is absolutely correct, as I suppose you know?"

"No," answered the stately Morant, "I had *not* known, but I'm ever pleased to sit at the feet of youth and—*learn!*"

Most people would have curled up at that tone, that manner, but Miss V—— simply turned on the baby stare and curled not at all. They were ringing up. I saw Mr. Daly hurrying to his lair in the first entrance. How many times I had seen him there to await my difficult scenes, his eyes anxious, his face palely rigid, and his long fingers clutching desperately at the lapel of his coat. Now he watched with eyes alight, a smiling face, and apparently he did not know there was a lapel on his coat—such was the comfort derived from one who could act by daylight.

The crowd of bridesmaids, mincing and preening about the bride like a flock of pigeons, was charming. Then, then the smile on Mr. Daly's face began to fade; he looked puzzled. And no wonder, for there seemed to be no *élan,* no glow. *Aplomb* so exaggerated as this might easily pass for *indifference!* Mr. Daly leaned forward and whispered sharply, " Wake up! " and, yes, he grabbed at the lapel of his coat. For the love episode was on and what *was* the matter? There were the graceful poses, the twining and embracing, the tender protestations, all exactly as they were rehearsed—and no more. Yes, that was it—*no more!* She had done her very best, let herself all out by day, and, with nothing in reserve, seemed mechanical at night.

The scene was lightly applauded. Mr. Daly pulled his hat down to the tops of his ears, and suddenly the scales fell from my eyes. And instead of the radiant, all-gifted rival, who was to push me from my stool, I saw a very pretty, over-confident young girl—that

was all. A great relief swept over me. A sudden new strength thrilled me. Afraid of the next act? Nonsense! I was afraid of nothing now—I was reprieved. I would show my gratitude.

It was a great night, a glorious one, and after all the noise was over, Mr. Daly said, "Good girl! you never did better in your life." And I treasured the words, for if he praised but seldom he was always sincere. With unspeakable extravagance I sent for a cab, that I might get safely home all my many floral monstrosities and a few bunches of long-stemmed, unskewered roses. And as the horse seemed to be walking in his sleep, I leaned back and thought these true thoughts: "Oh, I am safe now; and shall be for some time. This play is sure of a run. The unknown can't materialise before the first of next season. I have suffered two false alarms, but that must not prevent me from watching out for the real one." For though I was happy, very happy, and found a new success ineffably sweet, back of it all was that woman out there, waiting just beyond sight in the near future, who precisely as I had risen, in a single night, might in a single night supersede me; so let me be prepared, dear Lord! And that was the considerable alloy I found in the joy of being a successful leading lady.

II

I AM MARRIED

THERE is no habit more tenacious than the habit of work. Once acquire it, once let it fasten its powerful fangs upon you and you are helpless. You may never "loaf" and invite your soul. You cannot lounge about with your hands in your lap doing nothing all the fair long day. In reality, to the victim of the working habit there are no long days, they are all short days—yes, and they are short at both ends. Like many another I realised my danger when too late.

When I came to New York and the continued run of a play left me some hours of the day without work, I immediately went forth and hunted work to fill them up with, and 'twas thus I came to make the acquaintance of Monsieur Fasquelle of France, who had so much anxiety as to the whereabouts of his brother-in-law's hat and the butcher's candlestick. An excellent grammarian, M. Fasquelle, but a bit eccentric as a conversationalist it always seemed to me. I saw my danger then, but the habit was already too strong, and alas, it is not broken yet. Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that when I began to star, finding considerable time, in which I used to study plays, unoccupied, I turned my attention to the subject of matrimony. And let me say here, that the actress, even the sentimental one, generally arranges her

marriage with brevity, celerity and dispatch. She cannot, for her life, bring herself to look upon her wedding as a matter of world-moving importance, as does the girl in private life, who, judging by her own excitement, pride, display and momentary supremacy, decides that her marriage is nothing short of a social cataclysm.

Late in the '60's, actors still had their costumes carried to and from the theatre in champagne baskets by the basket boy, and the very first and most important duty of the actor or actress after rehearsal, was to get the basket ready and place it outside the door. Then, only, one might feel free. Well, Cupid had been taking a little flyer behind the scenes, and a young comedian had been stricken with love for a bit of a girl who danced between the first play and the farce. One day he saw the old leader of the orchestra tap her cheek with his bow, and the awful familiarity was too much to be endured silently. He walked home with her, and in the boarding-house hallway he spoke. A minister's name was mentioned —a number—a street—something about an office, a license; nothing seemed very clear except his love and his desire to get married at once: "Oh, Lizzie, will you marry me? Dear little Lizzie, will you?" he implored. And Lizzie, who was about the height of a nine-year-old child, but was full sixteen, very pink and very pleased, looked coyly up, then modestly down and answered: "I'm awful glad you love me, Ted—but—but really you know you'll have to wait a little."

Down went Ted's face. "Wait?" he cried, in a tragic voice. "Wait? Good kingdom, why—what for—how long?"

And Lizzie, with wide reproachful blue eyes, said: "Why, Ted, you know well enough—you'll have to wait till I get my basket ready!"

And when he heard the thump of that article at his sweetheart's door, he issued forth from his room—tied the strings of her bonnet under her chin, and they sallied forth and were married. And it is gratifying to know that that knot was not only simply and swiftly tied, but securely, too—for though they endured many hardships, faced many troubles, lost two wee lambs from the little flock sent them, while the blackest kind of a small goat was spared for them to struggle with, yet the sorrow and shame of divorce came never near them, never, and love lasted while life lasted.

Another actress-bride, here in New York city, being unable to leave town, though the heat was appalling, was married in the parlour, in a "going-away gown of pale grey," the papers said, and the reverend gentleman who had officiated having departed, straightway the bridal pair also went away upon their wedding journey—away upstairs—up a ladder—through a scuttle—out upon the roof, where a hammock swung between the chimneys. The bride ensconced herself and was sweetly served with ice-cream and angel cake by a very handsome, kneeling groom, who, finding the gravel cruelly hard and sharp, folded the napkin into a pad and placed it

beneath his bruised knee. And when the cream and angel cake were gone, their honeymoon rose and found them there with enwreathing arms and waving palm-leaf fans, still at their banquet, but now supping of the nectar of confessed love; each listening eagerly to the other's tale of how and when and where the first spark of love flew into an innocent, unsuspecting heart. Nor was the element of danger quite absent from this wedding journey. For the bride was a large woman, though a darkly handsome one, large was she and heavy, and the scuttle was small, the ladder almost straight and weak to shakiness. There was an earnest discussion along toward dawn as to which one should first descend, and finally the bride declared for the groom's advance: "You see, should I stick fast, dear, you might half starve up here, before our condition was discovered. But if you go first and I, in following, stick fast, you are ready to give the alarm and call upon the fire department for assistance—for scuttles, I think, are in the line of fire work."

So she came last, and though most of the rounds of the ladder came down with her, she was safely back from her wedding journey. Three weeks afterward, at a birthday dinner on Staten Island, I sat opposite this bride. Our hostess had been speaking of favourite places on the Hudson, and suddenly she asked of my *vis-a-vis*: "Your honeymoon was on the Hudson—so sensible, and did you go up or down?"

Pushing a tiny bone from the fish on her plate,

she answered, calmly: "I went up," then, as all the blood in my body seemed to be pumping up into my face, she gave me a reproachful look and added: "Don't you admire the country about Newburgh?" And that woman prides herself upon her truthfulness.

In contrast to these two rather exceptionally abrupt ceremonies, I recall the fact that at the first wedding I had the pleasure of attending in New York the young girl-bride had so worn out her strength in preparations, in shopping, in fittings, in receiving and acknowledging, in planning and arranging and rehearsing, that grave doubts were expressed by the family physician of her ability to pass through the church ceremony and the home reception without collapsing utterly. And the bridesmaids found themselves shouldered about, as they declared, by doctor and nurse; and when the maid of honour came to entreat for the frantic groom, one word with the bride, one single word, just through the merest crack of the door—that tormented young person burst forth with a "No!" and a passionate declaration that she "wished she had never seen him; and if he sent her another message she would never look at him again, as long as she lived!"

There were nerves for you. And oh, the pity of it! I saw a small bottle of chloral slipped into the travelling bag of that bride.

Yes, the girl in private life and the actress hold widely different views of weddings—weddings mind you, not marriages. An actress loves as warmly,

promises as truly, hopes as fairly as does the outsider who makes the ancient vow that is yet ever new, "To love, to honour, to obey!" Only the girl in private life often finds in her wedding her sole opportunity for personal display. It is her day of power and authority; when she plays the leading part; when she is the head and the front, the beginning and the ending. When—as a slangy little woman remarked to me a week or two ago—she is the bride and the bride is the whole show. Hence her joy in the great spectacular wedding. But the actress is on exhibition every day of her life. She is a mimic bride over and over again; and to a sensitive woman there is almost an immodesty in a public wedding for an actress.

All of which, when the time came, I elaborately, carefully and I hope lucidly explained to the family of my adoption. The wonder to me is that I ever married at all. In the first place, my love affairs ran a course so far from smoothness, so tangled and so rough, that a map of them would resemble the network of gullies a heavy rain storm cuts in garden paths and driveways. Then again, I got a bad start in matrimonial proposals—those cats not only spoiled the first one, but seemed to some extent to have hoodooed the others. You are sceptical, perhaps, because I, who was not beautiful, speak of lovers and proposals; but you should not be, for the woman who is plain and knows it often sees in her plainness a challenge from fate, and if she amiably and gaily takes it up, is apt to win—well, lovers, among other

things. Many women are in love with love before the special lover arrives upon the scene, and while there is flirtation that is silly and flirtation that is cruel there is too that flirtation which means attention without intention, that is quite a charming pastime, and one that is popular alike with homely or handsome women. Only the beauty often says to herself, after a new conquest: "It's this lovely mask he cares for. If my hair became thin; if my skin became sallow, my eyes dull, would he care for me then? Could I hold him? While the woman whose mirror shows her perhaps only clear eyes and generous wholesomeness, knows that keenest triumph. It is *I* whom he cares for! I—my very self! For here is no rare beauty of feature or colouring to attract his eye!

Well, beautiful women, who are the flowers of the human race, can afford to suffer a mild twinge or two: they have only to look into the nearest pair of eyes to find comforting admiration and be happy again. But oh, what a tragedy is the fading of a great beauty! A splendid creature once lost her nearest and dearest, and she brought herself to say: "The Lord gave—the Lord taketh away—blessed be the name of the Lord!" But when her beauty began to fade, with startling rapidity, she stood before her glass, in the presence of a friend, and forcing a smile, she said: "Ah, well—the Lord gave—the Lord taketh away—b-blessed—oh, I can't—I can't," she shrieked, "I can't bless His name! Why—oh, why give me beauty, only to rob me of it? It's cruel—

cruel!" One who saw that agony of loss expressing itself in uncontrollable cries and writhings, must have felt that sometimes one pays a penalty for being unusually beautiful. Yet I truly believe that no woman would be deterred even by such a sight from wishing to be fair to see.

Did you ever open your mother's Bible without finding a pressed rose or a pansy or a violet there? To you it looks yellow and dry as dust and meaningless, but she knows what you do not, and it is rich with the colour and sweetness her memory endows it with. Just so a woman has closed between the long past years the love affairs of her girlhood. Mere names, chill, meaningless they may seem to you, but her memory gives to them eye-sparkles, smile-flashes, the swift word, the knightly act; and no matter what change time and the world may have wrought upon those men, they remain ever young, ever admirable!

For my part, when I sort out my own little bunch of *beaux* I feel now a sort of maternal tenderness for them, and my tormenting spine almost straightens itself with pride as I recall the fact that every man-jack of them made his name stand for something worth while, and wrote it high enough to be clearly read by his fellow citizens, before retiring from the great struggle we call life. The demands of my profession received my first consideration; therefore, in the character of sweetheart I was pretty severely criticised now and then, while as a friend I was declared a creature of superlative perfections.

One resentful male creature remarked, as he grabbed his hat: "Love? Love's nothing but a miserable little side-issue in your life—and yet some donkey has written that love is only an incident in a man's life, and is the whole world to woman! Much he knew about it!"

John Cockerill, after kicking the hassock down stairs, declared that if all girls were as prudent and cautious as I was, every cottage in the city would be for rent, and a wedding would become a nine-days' wonder—while a soldier solemnly vowed that every single time he tried to deploy his tenderest sentiments, his admiration and his love before me, I left the reviewing stand to see if a wig was properly dressed for the night, or pulled a part over to me, to make quite sure of my lines in some infernal stage love scene. But out of the detritus of grumbling loves what splendid friendships came! Frank and true and lasting to the grave!

It's curious, too, the way in which my small love affairs are all tangled up with certain plays. My taking of a husband is so tied up with the production of "Macbeth" that I simply can't think of my wedding without hearing a swirl of the

"Around, around, around, around—
About, about, about, about" . . .

music of the witches' cave scene. Dear me—dear me! how those two memories do braid themselves together! First of all, it was the man I was engaged

to marry—Mr. John A. Cockerill—who gave to Mr. F. C. Harriott his letter of introduction to me. Then, to our mutual joy and happiness, John and I snapped our bonds and became our peaceable, law-abiding selves again. That becoming known to Mr. Harriott, he concluded that he would now enter the lists—which was right enough, only his courtship would have been much simplified if *Lady Macbeth* had not come upon the scene at almost the same time—for *place aux dames*. The lady was the first consideration. What a state of mind I was in to be sure! I could not accept the traditional, martial-stalking drum-major of a woman, who spoke in sepulchral stomach tones, and splashed about in blood, as though she were quite used to it; who spoke of dashing out the brains of her suckling babe with a fiendish satisfaction in her own nerve. That made her final remorseful breaking-down of brain and heart a contradiction, almost an impossibility.

Discussion of the famous character grew warm, reached the papers, and even the public, in the person of " Constant Reader," " Old Play-goer " and " Veritas," wrestled with the great question anent the masculinity or femininity of *Lady Macbeth*.

Occasionally my view of her character met with approval, but oftener I got a rap over the knuckles, by being sharply reminded that my age and inexperience only fitted me to follow, not to lead. That Mrs. Siddons, Miss Cushman, Madame Janauschek, had clung to a traditional *Lady Macbeth*, and that was the only one the public knew or wanted. I meekly

reminded "Veritas" that Mrs. Sarah Siddons, late in life, had herself declared for a distinctly feminine *Lady Macbeth,* fully confessing the error of her own characterisation, but adding she had not the courage to alter the presentation the public knew so well.

An actress in the West, who was not overburdened with reverence, once remarked in my hearing, that "*Lady Macbeth* was a fraud; that if the part were given out without a name, any decently fair actress would accept it without a second thought, but tack on the name *Lady Macbeth,* and the best pair of knees in the profession would begin to tremble. Besides, the part was greater to write about than it was to act," in her opinion.

There was truth in the first part of that assertion; there is a sort of traditional terror that wraps *Lady Macbeth* about as with a robe. You find all the greatness of the mighty Pritchard, Siddons, Cushman, and the rest looming up between you and the part you are studying; they and their business, their reading of certain lines: Siddons—"*We fail?*"—Cushman—"Give me the daggers!" go whirling through your brain. You feel smaller and smaller, and worst of all, those great traditions are frightening you away from Shakespeare's *Lady Macbeth.* You forget you have the same material to build with that they had—Shakespeare's own words. That you have the right to construe those words according to the best effort of your own God-given intelligence; and very often custom is too strong and one more

Lady Macbeth is too monumental, declamatory, gory-minded and domineering.

Yet *Macbeth* loved the fair-faced hypocrite and petted her with endearing terms. She was his "chuck," his "dearest chuck," his "dear love." Even to his king, he openly shows his love for her, when he asks the royal permission to himself act as harbinger

> *"And make joyful the hearing of my wife*
> *With your approach . . ."*

He makes no pretence of hastening ahead to prepare for the king's reception and bestowal—not one, only "to make joyful the hearing of his wife." Very well then, granted he loved and cossetted her—he was a fine soldier, big and bluff and physically brave, and "in joining contrasts lieth love's delight"—then his contrast would be the slender, slight, possibly small woman. Fair, soft, tender in seeming, this "dearest chuck," whose soft body housed a soul of fire; whose brain seethed with plans to gratify her devouring ambition. Nor was this pet and darling of the rough soldier's love supported in her dread deeds by her own mere normal strength. Crafty and subtle as she was, clever as her reading of *Macbeth's* character proves her to have been, she only became terrible as a fate through her absolute reliance upon the supernatural power of the witches. There is something appalling in her ready faith and eager summoning of the spirits of evil to her aid; and right

in that invocation I find my proof that *Lady Macbeth* was naturally womanly, pitiful, capable of repentance for wrong done, and had sufficient belief in God, to at least fear Him. For in that moment of exaltation, when the promise of the crown was tightening every thrilling nerve to a mad determination, her first demand of the "murdering ministers" is that they shall unsex her:

> "*And fill me from the crown to the toe, top-full*
> *Of direst cruelty.*"

Further she wants

> "*. . . the access and passage to remorse*"

stopped up, fearing the softening influence of her little child. She prays the evil spirits:

> "*. . . come to my woman's breasts*
> *And take my milk for gall. . . .*"

And apparently already convinced that she will have to do the awful deed herself, she prays:

> "*. . . Come thick night,*
> *And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell!*
> *That my keen knife see not the wound it makes;*
> *Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,*
> *To cry,* Hold, hold!"

She is graceful, suave and gracious to the *King,* she flatters and cajoles *Macbeth,* and when her boldness

startles him and he would gain time and "speak further," with assurance that is almost patronage, she bids him:

" . . . Only look up clear;
Leave all the rest to me."

You see already she is relying utterly upon the supernatural powers of the witches, and it is her faith in them that sustains her through the awful ordeals that follow. And when at last it is borne in upon her that they have played her husband false; that all stained with crime they two are left to face an outraged God, how quickly the delicate woman becomes a physical wreck.

Masculine? Never! Could a masculine woman show such tender pity and patience as *Lady Macbeth* shows for *Macbeth* in the banquet scene? Oh, the weariness, yet the wifely, almost maternal, gentleness of that line to the broken man:

" You lack the season of all natures, sleep."

So I was very busy in defending my idea of the feminine *Lady Macbeth;* in trying to arrange some "business" for my exit after the banquet scene, for alas, I had become a star, and had no one to "direct" for me now. Instead, in an agony of embarrassment and shyness, I had to direct everything myself. How I blessed my old days of service in the ballet just then, for I was so familiar with the time-honoured

music of Locke, with every bit of business for the apparitions, soldiers, supers, *et al.*, that not even the oldest witch chasséing about the cauldron could find a chance to sneer at my ignorance of the old tragedy —modern as I was. It was only the business for my own part that gave me a pause. Then, one day, that fine old actress, Mrs. Farren, who was an honour to her profession all her long life, and who had been *Lady Macbeth* before I was I at all, said to me very kindly, as she pressed my aching head between her cool hands: "Don't, my dear! Give it up!"

"Don't what, Mrs. Farren?" I asked, leaning my head against her breast for a few restful moments. "Give up what?"

"Your foolish idea of a coaxing, crafty, womanly *Lady Macbeth*. Forgive my plain speaking, my child, but you work so hard, and I fear you are pouring your strength upon the dry earth. I hate to see such waste. My dear, I starred for years in "Macbeth," and the louder, more violent, more declamatory I was the better the people liked me. They expect to see *Macbeth* bullied into action, to speak frankly."

"But," I asked, "what makes her break down, if she is such a white sergeant of a woman? The public must think that——"

"That's where you blunder, my dear, the public does not think. That's one of your new notions. Now, my child, you are sensitive, so why not save yourself unkind criticism. Cut your cloth by the

good old-fashioned pattern—you know, it well. Oh, that's your cue—well run along."

Imagine my heaviness of heart after that, for I knew the dear woman spoke with the kindest intention, and I was deeply touched, for at that time she was almost a stranger to me. And if you can believe it, that being also a Friday, Mr. Harriott concluded that that afternoon was a fit and proper occasion for a proposal; and being a man of considerable decision of character, he proposed. And lo! we both made the discovery that in the breast of this meek and humble Clara there dwelt a certain pride, stiff-necked and exacting. For you see, I was an actress—otherwise a nobody, and this gentleman who addressed me was an outsider and a member of an old and well-known family, and I said: "When your people are acquainted with your intentions, and——"

Of course he interrupted me with the time-honoured remark about "marrying him, not, etc.," but I, having been made quite savage by the "Macbeth" rehearsal, was determined to marry the whole family or not at all. No—not even would I try on a ring, let alone wear one, until the Harriotts on one side and the Havemeyers on the other, knew and approved of the proposed marriage. And he went forth to seek his family, while I sought bay rum, a handkerchief and the playbook of "Macbeth," and the proposal of marriage hung in the air, like Mahomet's coffin—but what could you expect of a proposal made on a Friday?

III

I STAND BETWEEN LADY MACBETH AND MATRIMONY

THAT night of the suspended marriage proposal was on my part devoted to a final *séance* with *Lady Macbeth*. When good-nights were over; when little dog, Bertie, that she might not tease me for my attention, had received an ancient pair of gloves to guard; when the house was quiet; then indeed, with all my soul, I strove to make the great woman-criminal reveal herself to my awed understanding, if only in some slight degree. I decided, too, upon a definite plan of action, for ready as I ever was to profit by the inspiration of the moment, I should have felt myself reckless and presuming had I not carefully prepared business for each scene. If inspiration came, so much the better, but if it should fail me, there would be the carefully thought out business, which meant security; and security meant dignity, and where would dignity be required if not in the delivery of Shakespeare's stately measures.

Because I had represented fairly well the heroines of modern drama, there were people who believed that I was bound to measure *Lady Macbeth* by a strictly modern standard; bound to reduce to a colloquial tone and manner the majestic formality of her awe-inspiring language. These unpleasant antici-

pations added to Mrs. Farren's fears, and my own sick terror of the part, were in a fair way to make my *Lady Macbeth* a sort of human blanc-mange, colourless and quaking. Then, at the most critical moment, a ray of encouragement came to me from an unexpected quarter. Miss Charlotte Cushman had once done me the great honour of coming in when her own work was over to see the last act of a play I was in. I had little to do, but she was generous in applause, and turning to her escort, she remarked, in her deep voice: "(She is young and of the new school, I know, but I believe she is one of "us" after all—do you see how she listens when the others are speaking—how she keeps in the character all the time) That's a woman who began at the bottom of the ladder. I'm not afraid to wager she has been in the very ballet, somewhere, sometime." And she seemed much gratified when told she had guessed correctly, and on two or three occasions she alluded to me as "the last of the old school."

When the discussions anent the character of *Lady Macbeth* broke out, she was in Philadelphia, where the matter was brought to her attention, by a young man, generally known for his peculiarly clumsy flatteries. It occurred to him that it would be a nice compliment and grateful to the feelings of the great actress to hear the ideas of a lesser one ridiculed and grossly caricatured, and he closed an exaggerated description of the feminine *Lady Macbeth* I stood for, with the laughter-choked cry: "And—and red hair—sandy red hair, may it please you! She expects

an audience to patiently submit to a *Lady Macbeth* with sandy hair! And where the grandeur and the terrifying force you have accustomed us to, is to come from, upon my soul I don't know, for the Morris is no more than five feet in height—ha! ha!"

And with a calm and perhaps unconscious cruelty, Miss Cushman remarked: "Ah, about your own height, I imagine. But, young sir, you should know the power and force of the actress is not to be measured by the weight avoirdupois of the woman. The few minutes I once passed in the company of a frail little victim of homicidal mania is the most terrifying memory of my life."

"Ah, yes—quite so. Insanity is alarming," stammered the little man, "but—I—I was thinking of this young woman's presumption. To my mind now traditions should be sacred, and this idea of a mere little emotional actress attempting a great classic——"

Then the stately head went up—a real Cushman flash came into the calm eyes, as with generous warmth she cried: "In God's name, what would become of the stage without the presumption of the young? We, who have succeeded cannot live forever! Others must make ready to fill our places." Then turning to the lady who accompanied her that morning, she said with a smile: "My own luggage consisted in great part of youth and presumption, when I began my career, and I like this girl's pluck, in standing out for her own idea—besides, she is right. I have for years recognised the absolute

womanliness of *Lady Macbeth*—her reasoning is good. I have friends who rely to-day upon spiritualism for aid in well-doing, just as she thinks *Lady Macbeth* relied upon the witches for aid in wrong-doing. You cannot well escape from the perfect femininity of the character if you study her carefully. You both look amazed—but what can I do at this time of my life? I played the part in the traditional manner, the big, heavy style, and it was lucky for me that the public liked it, or I should have been short of a good drawing play—for though intellectually I am for the feminine *Lady Macbeth,* physically "—she laughed—" I am not well fitted for the coaxing, purring, velvet-footed, supple hypocrite." Then turning back to the unfortunate youth, who had tempted his fate, she finished him and the subject both, by saying: "As to the red hair, sir, I know Scotland and its people well, and I believe there are more flaxen, red and sandy Scots than there are black ones. So she is justified in wearing red hair if it helps her to indicate the character."

Oh, the thrill of joy that went through my heart when I heard that this big-brained, thoughtful, experienced actress—the greatest *Lady Macbeth* of her time—declared for the femininity of that character. Her words of generous encouragement were like a strong staff to lean upon, until the public could decide whether or no it would support my uncertain footsteps.

Whenever the memory of that famous woman, Charlotte Cushman, is summoned suddenly to my

mind, she appears not as *Meg Merrilies;* not as *Queen Catharine,* but as the stately gentlewoman, whose crown of beauty came to her with age in the pure white hair that seemed to soften not only her expression, but the very outlines of her too square jaw and the majestic brow. So, often I used to see her driving in the park, frequently quite alone. Her grey silks, her swath of black laces, her regal bearing, her gentle courtesy, made the heart leap up in pride of her—for no royal woman in Europe looked so like the ideal queen-dowager as did that aged actress. And yet she never failed at the same time to suggest to me the idea of a supposedly extinct volcano; there was the lonely grandeur, the stern snow-covered height, and great calm surface, but now and again certain sounds, certain tremors hinted strongly at the hidden fires still surging in that volcano of dramatic power and genius.

When, heartened greatly by the reported words of Miss Cushman, I had decided upon a general plan of action, two matters of mere detail came up for most anxious consideration. Every actress is sensitively alive to the pleasure of a warm reception—that being the technical term for the applause with which the audience greets the first appearance of an artist before any word has been spoken. Generally speaking, it signifies a courteous greeting, corresponding to a lifted hat and a pleasant salutation. But on occasions when the actress is a special favourite, the reception, enthusiastic and long continued, becomes a demonstration, which is inartistic and destructive

of the illusion of the play, since it drags the actress out of her part, and in her bowing and curtseying and smiling she becomes Miss Jones or Miss Morris, returning thanks to the public. A woman would not be human who did not enjoy to the last drop of her blood, just such a greeting, even though her artistic sense condemned it. Surely I ought to know—by the way, I hope at this distance of passed years I may speak frankly of triumphs won, of favours received, with no more charge of vanity than is made against the silver-haired mother, who recounts for her daughter's entertainment the conquests her beauty made in the past days of her acknowledged belle-hood. Of course her beauty is gone, but legends of its past existence justify her gentle boasting. So, too, there are still with us those who have not only seen some nights of wild enthusiasm at the theatre, but have done their own extravagant best to add to their fervour.

Well, to return to the subject. Those joyous, long-sustained receptions that had been so sweet to me, the artist in me suddenly realised would be simply ruinous in the case of *Lady Macbeth*. Just think of it. The play is already running at high tide, and at her very first step she is up to her lips in tragedy: "*They met me in the day of success; and I have learned by the perfectest report they have more in them than mortal knowledge*," she reads with eager intensity of interest as she enters. And there are but thirty-six brief words between that entrance and one of the greatest moments in the entire part: "*They*

made themselves air into which they vanished!" How impossible, then, would be the recognition of a reception. B-r-r-r! one's teeth were on edge at the thought! And yet the public, it is sensitive—it is quick to take offence at times, and the actress who does not quail at the thought of vexing her public may exist, but certainly I have not met her yet.

So on that night I was bracing my courage up to the point of calmly ignoring the reception, that I knew would be not only a greeting but an assurance of a fair field and no favour, and their hearty good wishes for my success, and what would they think if their courtesy were not acknowledged even by a glance—I asked myself one moment, while in the next I was recalling a dozen proofs of the extraordinary quickness of perception shown by the American public, and—and, well I resolved I must take the risk—anything rather than see *Lady Macbeth* smiling and bowing and perhaps kissing hands, and then trying to get back into the wrapt eagerness of the letter-reader. One other thing, a trifle, yet part of the whole, I decided to keep by me a great circular cloak of grey material, to wrap about me in going before the curtain—for no actor or actress can be denied the honour of curtain calls, yet they do break the illusion of the play; and I meant to hide *Lady Macbeth* by at least the size and thickness of a cloak, and let Miss Morris go before the curtain, leaving the great Thane's wife in the play, if possible. I had done all I could then, so I took the gloves from under Bertie's chin, and as she sprang to the foot of

the bed, looking over for that never forgotten bear, I raised my hand to lower the gas and heard the clock strike three, and suddenly I wondered whether Mr. Harriott had rounded up his family yet? "Bertie," I said, "suppose we were asked what family of Morris we belong to, do you know we would have to say, 'if you please, we are not Morris at all—our characters are good, but we have no family, no family at all!'"

Bertie looked as if she thought I had said "Rats!" and I laughed. I could afford to because I had related to my suitor, with both emphasis and detail every disagreeable fact connected with my birth and early life. I had also warned him of certain unpleasant penalties a man might have to pay for marrying an actress. For myself, I was sure that if a man, I could never endure the impertinence of being referred to as Miss So-and-So's husband, and I inquired, too, as to the degree of violence he might be expected to show, if brutally addressed as Mr. Morris, by some hurried doctor, reporter or conductor? I think *that* suggestion gave him pause, for his smile had certainly been a trifle forced, but I had done my duty; I had concealed nothing of the French-Canadian father's perfidy; my legal, social and dramatic status had been made quite plain—and, well, I laughed.

Next morning, at ten-thirty, Mr. Harriott appeared, bearing messages, invitations and photographs of a family whose dimensions made me gasp; and whose generous willingness to accept me on trust, as little boys say "sight unseen," brought a lump

into my throat. And at eleven o'clock all ringed and engaged, I was rehearsing with consciously augmented dignity, the brave old tragedy. While on Monday evening, yet another incident occurred that helped so to interline the speeches of the play with courtship, proposal, acceptance and family recognition of the player, that it is almost impossible to unbraid the memories.

There are few plays that can more quickly turn a medium-sized theatre into a veritable pandemonium than can "Macbeth." The noise and confusion caused by extra people; the darkness, the extended brace for the tripping up of the unwary, the open traps for the swallowing up of the careless or the ignorant. The startling and disturbing appearance of the witches, the seeming frenzy of the stage manager, the helter-skelter-ing of gasmen, carpenters and scene-shifters, the testing of the thunder and the lightning, the hasty and stumbling arrival of the musicians, who are to give the "flourishes" behind the scenes, and who swear volubly in foreign languages, thus escaping the forfeiture for all English swearing; the blue-burning cauldron; the snake entwined *Hecate;* the fiercely barbaric looking Thanes or warriors. If all this is confusing to an actor, what must it seem to an outsider, who sees behind the curtain for the first time?

On that Monday night I had gone very early to my dressing-room, that I might not get flurried over some trivial thing and lose my hold upon my part; and with head like fire and hands like ice, I was

looking in the glass and wondering miserably if any other *Lady Macbeth* ever had such modern-looking features—features that to my excited imagination flatly contradicted my perfectly correct woollen gown, my head drapery, my rolled scroll letter? "Oh, dear!" I moaned, contemplating my full length reflection, "everything looks nice and Macbethy, except my face! Oh, for a Greek, coin-like profile!" and a knock came upon the door.

"Is that for the overture?" I called. "All right, my lad, go ahead!"

But another knock sounded and the call-boy's voice replied: "It ain't me, mum, it's some gentlemen that wants you."

And just as the property man tested his lightning flash, I flung open the door, to find standing there, very close together, two old gentlemen, whose bewildered, discomfited faces suggested at once a pair of ancient babes in the wood. For a moment we stood helplessly staring, then a powerful resemblance told me who the sturdier, white-haired man must be, and I put forth my hands and drew the babes out of the hurly-burly into my room, that was by comparison an oasis of peace and sanity. And lo, with the closing of the door, the bewildered ones became instantly a pair of shrewd, clear-sighted old business men, who were forming swift conclusions as to the manner of woman, son and nephew Fred was rushing so suddenly into the family. Mr. Warren Harriott (father) having been introduced, he in turn presented Mr. Frederick C. Havemeyer

(uncle). They were beautiful old men. One sturdy, ruddy, white-haired and always in white neckwear. The other, lean, silver-haired, high featured, slightly formal, gentle-voiced—the sort of man whom you expect to wear the winged Gladstone collar and black satin stock.

They informed me that they had made some mistake for Fred was to have met them at the door to bring them in, but since they had found me, it was all right, and they would not detain me only long enough to make an explanation and ask a question. The family were out of town, and among the most anxious to greet me was Grandmother Havemeyer, but she was ninety-two years old and not quite strong enough to come to the city just now. Fred's mother and sisters did not wish to delay their visit, neither did they wish to disappoint the beloved grandmother. So could I—would I, in consideration of such great age—but I interrupted him to say, swiftly "Yes I could—and I would—on any day save Saturday, that might be agreeable to them."

Then one pressed my hand and the other patted my shoulder, and both said: "You have a kind heart, my dear." And Mr. Havemeyer added: "When you have seen my mother you will not regret this waiving of ceremony, and your right to a first visit from our people, for her sake."

And I being a passed master in the gentle art of mother worship, felt a strong desire to embrace then and there this newly met brother worshipper. I could not help noticing how Mr. Harriott's eyes kept turn-

ing to my hair, as I thought with a slight frown, and suddenly I remarked: "This is not my hair, sir, it is a wig. I'm just a common, every day, brown in reality."

And his hearty and relieved: "Well, I'm thankful to hear that, my child," set us off laughing, and laughter being the key that unlocks the shackles of formality and restraint, we were chatting away quite happily, when with a crash the overture burst forth. Instantly the bewildered anxious look came back to their faces and they drew close together again.

"We ought to go," remarked Mr. Harriott, nervously.

"Yes," I frankly acquiesced, "but before we say good-bye, I will see you safely past these treacherous open traps. The stage is so dark for this act, you might meet with an accident."

I opened the door to find Mr. Fred Harriott there, just raising his hand to knock. The joyful recognition that flashed into those two old faces, the certainty that now they would be safely piloted out of that pandemonium, was both amusing and touching. They turned back to me a moment. Mr. Havemeyer with gentle-voiced formality offered his congratulations and good wishes, and Mr. Harriott bluntly remarked: "You're a good girl, and I'm glad to have you for a daughter," and bent his white head and kissed me right heartily. And that was how I came into possession of one of the dearest fathers in the world! And while I was biting my lips hard and batting my eyelids rapidly to keep back tears, that might spoil

my careful make-up, someone standing by the stage door, said excitedly as the three gentlemen passed out: "Why—why that was F. C. Havemeyer—w-what is he doing behind the scenes of a theatre?" The door man replied: "He came to see Miss Morris."

"Oh, indeed—and F. C. Harriott is Havemeyer's nephew, isn't he—huh-uh! everything fair and friendly too, eh?" And next day approaching marriage notices broke out in various papers, and after that Mr. Harriott's family grew in importance and their genealogical tree reached upward higher and ever higher, until kings and emperors might have humbly sat beneath its towering boughs. And but for the nightly plaudits of the public, I might by comparison have felt myself a very worm. For oh, joy! joy! *Lady Macbeth* had been accepted. Even the reception stumbling-block some stranger's hand had removed from my path.

I had come upon the stage swiftly, scroll open, lips moving, eyes racing eagerly from line to line. The applause broke out. I stood and read. It increased in volume—my heart-beats choked me, but I read on. Would it go on forever? My knees trembled—my courage was failing me—the applause began to thin—the heart went out of it. I felt disapproval distinctly—obstinacy only was keeping the reception up. I was just going to raise my eyes, when someone understood, and said clearly, loudly: "S-s-h—S-s-sh!" then swiftly added, "*brava*" and again "sh-sh!" and like lightning the house caught the idea. There was a quick, sharp round of applause, approv-

ing, comprehending, then perfect silence fell, and in a voice choked by rapid breathing, I read: "*They met me in the day of success.*"

Another happy accident came to me later on. I could ill support the dragging weight of the royal robes, while the crown was so cruelly heavy that the pain from it became at last almost unbearable, while in the banquet scene the tense watchfulness, the swift changes rung upon the emotions, the royal dignity, queenly hospitality, the fine self-restraint and calm assurance had all been in vain, when the woman's whole splendid line of defence had broken down under *Macbeth's* second outburst of mad, all-revealing terror, the player was physically as shattered, shaken, spent as was ever *Lady Macbeth* spiritually. It was in the momentary pause that followed the exit of all the guests that I realised in addition to the weight, the unpadded edge of the metal crown was actually cutting my brow. *Lady Macbeth's* last line had been spoken, *Macbeth* had turned and walked with sombre mien to the R. I. entrance, repeating his exit speech. As he reached the line:

> . . . *My strange and self abuse*
> *Is the initiate fear, that wants hard use:*"

the Queen unable to longer endure her suffering, raised both hands and lifted the crown up from her head and in the same instant, the King turning, noted the action with such a surprised frown, that quick as a flash the Queen dropped it to its place again and

bravely smiled into his face; while both were startled by the swift-following applause of sympathetic comprehension. He added his suggestive:

"We are yet both young in deed."

and so made exit, and *Lady Macbeth* kept her forced smile till he was quite gone. Then it faded. Slowly she removed the crown and stood looking at it, calculating all its cost, until tears trickled down her wan cheeks, when hearing a sound outside she hastily resumed it, and with listless, hanging arms and drooping shoulders, feebly dragged her royal trappings, her misery and herself out of sight as the curtain fell. That had not been the "business" I had prepared, but it was better, as warm impromptu action is apt to be superior to coldly thought out effects; and I find that I, who almost never keep a clipping, have kept one criticism of that night's work, because of the appearance in it of the quite unusual word "apocalypse." "At the fading of that bravely forced smile, the woman's face became a very apocalypse of woe," it reads—where is Polonius, with his "mobled queen," would he say "apocalypse is good," or would he not?

But while I agonised in silent dread of the great test—the sleep walking scene, Mrs. Farren came to me in hideous witch's garb, and put kind arms about me, and said: "My dear, God has blessed you with great originality. Stop torturing yourself like this. Trust to yourself, as the people out there trust to you

—have confidence. For forty years I have believed utterly in the masculinity of *Lady Macbeth,* yet in three hours you have converted me to a belief in her femininity. Is that nothing then?—for my dear, Mary Ann Farren has been a power in her day!"

"And is still," I answered, honestly; and was grateful for her thought of me, and truly tried to follow her advice, and could not foresee the time when she would laughingly count my seventh call before the curtain, for the same dreaded scene; and dry the angry tears shed, because in the excitement a man, had clambered up on to the stage and triumphantly cut a piece from my beautiful white crèpe draperies, to keep as a souvenir, a style of compliment that never recommended itself to my favour.

About three weeks later and quite after the manner of actresses generally my marriage was hastily sandwiched in between two professional engagements. To avoid the annoyance of facing the crowd of curious idlers who haunt church doors when a wedding threatens, I deceived even my maid and my landlady as to the hour appointed for the ceremony—for it had become evident that someone near me was giving out information with lavish generosity. So when the day came around, all brave in *matlasée* and silver-fox, with orange flower bouquet the groom's gift, accompanied and supported by my whole family in the person of my mother, I arrived at noon before that Presbyterian church (Fourth avenue and Twenty-third street), whose tenets I rejected, but whose eloquent pastor I greatly honoured, and entering its parlour

received a joyous surprise. For enthroned in an armchair, the centre of an adoring group, grandmother Havemeyer with smiling lips and eager eyes sat waiting, and in a moment I was worshipping with the rest, while receiving her soft kisses and gentle blessing. And indeed she was the sweetest of ancient ladies. Her pretty white hair, her merry eye, the faint colour on cheek and lip, all made her look like a belated rose, and every one of her ninety-two years seemed to be represented by some separate grace or charm, or virtue, some fair thought or fairer deed. Her grandson Fred was her special and particular chum, and she had stoutly maintained he should not marry without her presence; and there she was.

So a bit later the Reverend Howard Crosby, book in hand, began the marriage service, and I started out to attend devoutly to every tremendously important word of it; when the strangely wrinkled condition of one side of Dr. Crosby's robe aroused an intense curiosity as to why one side and not the other should be so deeply creased; while faintly through all that worked the hope that the ring might not fall and roll under the seats. It would be so embarrassing for whoever had to seek for it. "Eh? '*yes,*' and again, '*yes,*'—and lo, I was Mrs. Harriott. And I had married not only my husband but his whole family. I—who had never had sisters, or brothers, had them now galore! the dearest, the best, with father and adorable second mother for good measure.

But now that the superstitious may not be deprived of their dues, let me say that Mr. Harriott having

begun his wrong-doing in luck, by proposing on Friday, continued in his evil course by adding to his wedding gift of diamonds a fine opal, and finally reached his apogee of bad luck by clasping said opal about my throat for the actual service. I may add we were married on a Monday—second worst day of the week; on the last of November—worst month of the year. As we left the church the crowd was already beginning to gather, for the wedding that had been announced for 3 P.M. I was laughing happily over our escape, when I saw a look of annoyance coming into my lord's face and our speed slackened strangely, and oh, well, the driver had got himself all tangled up in a great funeral! Oh, no, I'm not through yet—for at the very moment we had stood before the minister, another uncle, Mr. Havemeyer, then Mayor of New York, whose note of excuse and explanation grandmother was holding in her hand, had fallen dead from his chair, and by some odd coincidence had been caught in the arms of a man bearing the name of Morris.

There! there are omens enough to swamp half a dozen marriages! Yet, dear me, that was in 1874, and this is—good gracious 1906! And though the dear family I married is pitifully shrunken and small now, the husband, superstition to the contrary notwithstanding, big and ruddy and as English looking as if he had just left the Shires, is sitting not far off, and not the sign of a divorce decree to be found in this house. What's the use of respecting omens after that!

IV

THE MOXA

AMONG my friends there was one who was particularly bitter against the press, because it had so little consideration for the privacy of the individual. She denounced the tittle-tattle, the continued gossiping about the doings of those men and women who in one way or another had come into the eye of the public, and was quite specially severe upon those persons who heedlessly gave information to the "meddlesome Matties," that being her picturesque tribal name for all newspaper reporters, interviewers, etc. Yet it was owing solely to her own personal indiscretion that the following letter reached the newspapers, and through them my private affliction became public property. A letter so swiftly, so widely copied, that I actually met it face to face in a French paper before I had started for home.

Wounded, mortified, and hotly angry was I, over the breach of confidence, until upon my arrival here I met that wondrous wave of sympathy that, starting afar off from the great cities, tangled in the white fringe of the Pacific, had in its onward sweep reached out both North and South, ever gathering pity and sorrow, kindly thoughts and many prayers in its swell; a wave that broke about me heart high, washing away all anger and humiliation and leaving only profound gratitude and a great wonder that the

public should not only heed but sympathise with the pain of one of the least of its servants.

But oh, what a crop of piteous letters was gathered into my letter-box directly after my return from Paris!—so many, many poor sufferers in varying degrees from spinal trouble wrote to me eagerly asking if the *moxa* cured? If it had cured me? And would I advise others to submit to the treatment? And oh! poor souls! I had to confess I had apparently suffered in vain.

Physicians here at home declared the details of the operation were barbaric and outrageous; that the needless strain of waiting, the sound of the furnace, the preparatory marking of the spine with a pencil, were cruel, unnecessary, and I almost believe, but for three disinterested witnesses, they would have added incredible.

Even the preliminary examinations seemed to me to be theatrical and designed to impress and awe me —each of the doctors with his paper and his pencil solemnly making his little notes. Could I stand this way? Could I bend that way? Could I walk a straight line with my eyes open?

"But, good sir," I remonstrated, "I am a teetotaller!"

They went on, they measured off so many feet on the floor, and marked each end of the distance with a chair. They bandaged my eyes tight and, quite unnecessarily, drew down the shades also before placing me at one chair and bidding me try to walk blindfolded to the other.

"Ah!" I remarked, "your blindman's-buff is a rather staid and melancholy game. I prefer the English version." As they gravely measured how far I was away from the chair I had aimed at, I hopefully suggested a change to "puss in the corner."

Dr. Belvin, an American by birth, strove desperately not to laugh, for Professor Ball, who was his superior, looked upon mirth as the sure sign of an empty mind. Then, with a weighty and momentous manner, the hawk-faced professor began sticking needles into the calves of my unfortunate legs, while, quite in the style of the Inquisition, Dr. Belvin behind me took down this conversation:

"Do you feel these punctures?" (Being alive, yes.) "Are they painful?" (Naturally.) "How many needles am I using?" My eyes were bandaged still. (One.) "Now, how many?" (Two.) "Now, how many?" (I—I can't tell.) "Now, how many?" (The whole paper, I think! Sharp's make; mixed sizes!) "Madame jests—make a note, monsieur. That is certainly of the unusual—since madame undoubtedly suffers. The other leg, now. Ah! that is, eh?" (Yes, professor, "that *is*," as you say. Most decidedly these prickings are harder to bear. Two—three—I think five—gracious! I wish you'd permit me to offer you a cushion for your needles.)

The bandage being removed—to my great relief—I was about to retire my indignant and smarting calves to the protecting shelter of the lacy white petticoat of the period, when the scientific hawk swooped down upon my foot—nay, my feet; and his plucking

off of my shoes made me think of the hungry dismembering of prey. Exaggerated? Very likely, but that was the fancy of the sorely tried and secretly frightened woman, whose black silk heels were planted upon his knees, with soles facing him like a pair of medium sized flat-irons; and I watched with grave curiosity while the professor, with long, bony fingers, strove to tickle—yes, tickle—those immovable, irresponsive black soles of mine. He gazed at me menacingly, with ever growing excitement, as his nails vainly scratched up and down, criss-cross, while I regarded his efforts with the half-amused, large patience of a mother who sees her child planting pennies in the flower-pot in the hope of raising little pocket-book plants from them. Suddenly he sprang up. "You—you laugh not? You have not even to squirm? You, who are one bundle of nerves—broken, sick nerves at that—yet you have the feet nerveless! of the marble! You are extraordinaire, madame! You have made the note, mon confrère? the feet *not* to be tickle—eh? you have him? Bien! A-a-ah!" he shook his ten fingers furiously at me. "A-a-ah! you are an extraordinary woman—bien, oui!"

"Mais, non!" I objected "It is you, monsieur, who are extraordinary. You do not consider that I am a stranger to your ways. You should give me time. In America, now, a gentleman never thinks of tickling the feet of a lady who calls upon him for advice. Would not even if the call were purely social. He entertains her with conversation, pays her compliments that tickle her fancy or her pride, pos-

sibly—but he respects her soles. Dr. Belvin, you don't seem well? But you can, I think, as an American, bear me out in my assertion, and perhaps you will also return my shoes; I should greatly dislike going down to the carriage in my stocking feet."

And while the big Kentuckian, shaking with laughter, replaced my shoes, I shook with sick terror of the decision I was presently to listen to. My nonsense was not meant for flippancy—but laughter was my only shield, a jest my only weapon of defence, and the greater my pain and fright and need, the more recklessly I used them. Then I heard my fate: "The iron—or——"

"Well," I asked, "or what?" and they added:

"A year—perhaps a year and a half of time, and——"

So that night was a night of terror—because of an active and excited imagination. My husband and my mother were on the other side of that great ocean that widens so terribly between hearts at need, and troubles always loom gigantic at night, and the decision rested wholly with me. "Oh," I whispered over and over, "if it were not my back! If only I could see for myself what was to be done! But how helpless I shall feel, knowing they are exchanging nods and signs behind me, and—*No,* I will *not* take ether or chloroform!" I cried aloud. "If I die, I will at least die consciously!" And with a start I found that I had then resolved to endure the new and, to me, revolting treatment by burning—called the *moxa.* And being decided, I had but one conscious thought—to

hurry, to get the thing done, lest my courage fail! To get it done, that the strained anxiety in the eyes of my friends might give place to relief, perhaps to satisfaction. This letter, to the indiscreet one, will speak for their sympathy and distress:

11 rue de la Bienfaisance,
Paris, August 12th, 1875.

My dear ——: I hasten to write you, as I am well able under the circumstances, of the terrible trial to which our dear little friend has been subjected. As Prof. Ball concurred in the opinion given by Dr. Belvin that the disease of the spine would, if not arrested, terminate fatally within two years, she determined to submit to the treatment that it makes me shudder to think of. She said: "Only let me have it over—don't let me think of it!" And last Tuesday we drove to the doctor's rooms, No. 51 rue de la Luxembourg. She was very pale, probably though not more so than usual, but I could not but notice that the nostrils were dilated and the mouth more firmly set than usual. She conversed less than common and in fits and starts, and, strange to say, of the most trivial things we saw upon our way. Arriving at Dr. Belvin's we were annoyed at not finding Prof. Ball there, and had to wait for him nearly an hour; all the while our poor friend sat, with her hands clasped between her knees, saying at intervals: "If they keep me waiting, I shall fail—I know I shall fail!"

At last the professor was announced, and then fifteen more minutes were given to preparations in an adjoining room. Clara had stipulated that she should not see the furnace nor the irons, and it cost the two physicians some trouble and labour to comply with her wishes. We were at last summoned to enter, and nothing was visible but the low chair in which the victim was to sit, and the two operators. Dr. Belvin is a man over thirty-five, with a clear

blue eye, blond head, and a rather kind expression of face. Prof. Ball is about sixty, with a prominent hooked nose, small grey eyes, and of less than medium height. It may have been the circumstances, but he looked to me the beau ideal of an Inquisitor of the Spanish Inquisition—well deserving the title given him in Paris among medical men of "The Butcher," on account of his terrible and frequent operations.

Poor Clara was required to sit in a low chair, with her back bared, and she went through the preparations quietly enough, but with her face pale and rigid as marble. The only evidence beyond this was the pitiful trembling of her poor little hands. She spoke calmly, however, requesting me to hold her head, not her hands, and as she sat looking up at me as if to read in my face what was going on behind her, I believe I suffered the more of the two.

Then Dr. Belvin lit his furnace, and the roaring of the flame that was to heat the irons to a white heat in a few seconds, was dreadful to hear; and while this was going on Prof. Ball marked with a pencil the line the iron was to follow on either side of the spine. Every touch of the pencil sent a thrill through the delicate frame of the poor victim; but the professor had scarcely ended making the penciled marks when with a flash the iron was applied. The white point seemed to sink an inch into the quivering form, with that sickening sound of burning flesh—but beyond a writhing of the body, accompanied by deep, heavy breathing, there was no response, not a shriek, not a sigh nor groan. The doctor had nearly completed his dreadful task when Clara, suddenly starting up, cried out in a voice that even moved Prof. Ball: "My God! I cannot—I cannot bear it!"

It was all over, however, and, do you know, she helped replace her clothes, after the wounds were dressed, and walked down to the carriage. The doctor said it was a

wonderful exhibition of nerve. She is quite prostrated to-day and suffers from violent pains in her head. The doctor says it is all right, and she will be up and well soon, but to us she seems alarmingly weak. I forgot to say that she was urged to have the operation performed while under chloroform, but positively refused.

Since writing the above we have learned that Dr. Fordyce Barker, of New York, is here in Paris, and we are going to call him in, in consultation with Prof. Ball and Dr. Belvin. I will write you further.

Ah! Well it was for me that Dr. Barker came upon the scene, for, in spite of my diminishing strength and ever lessening vitality, the Paris doctors insisted upon repeating the trying operation, and as I was no longer strong enough to go to them, they volunteered to come to me at the hotel. The hour was set and the day had arrived before Colonel Piatt, who was the acting guardian and guide of his wife, his sister and myself, had succeeded in his almost frantic search for Dr. Barker. By galloping the life nearly out of a poor cab horse, he managed to get him to the hotel a scant ten minutes ahead of the arrival of Messrs. Belvin and Ball. Only ten minutes, but long enough for him to swiftly examine the patient, his sorely broken countrywoman; for surprise to become amazement and amazement indignation—long enough to reach a stern decision. He gently laid my thin waxy hand down upon my knee and said: "We'll have no operation to-day, my child. You are afraid there may be trouble? Well, don't *you* worry, that's all. You have worried too much already. There's been an aw-

ful mistake here, but it's going no further, please God! Trouble, eh? Well, I'll take that trouble on my shoulders. Oh! *how* do you do, gentlemen?" for the two doctors, carrying all the demnition paraphernalia of the modern Inquisition with them, entered and stood amazed at the presence of the big, handsome man, with the big, cordial manner and no voice to speak of. Then, as Dr. Barker was recognised professionally, both in London and Paris, as a very, very great gun of the heaviest calibre, and socially as the very fine flower of good fellowship, they greeted him with extravagant demonstrations of regard. When Colonel Piatt asked them to receive the doctor in consultation they exchanged glances and answered that as soon as the *moxa* had been applied they would gladly consult with him.

And right there the snag that was to prevent further smooth sailing revealed itself to all, when Dr. Barker demanded immediate consultation and imperiously removed me from the scene by the simple expedient of picking me up and carrying me into the next room. "Wait here," he said; "I may want you for just a moment—but have no fear; there is to be no *moxa* to-day, nor to-morrow either!" and, smiling his kind smile, he went back—and then, oh, dear! very soon the voices rose excitedly.

Suddenly the door opened. "Gentlemen!" cried Dr. Barker, entering; "come here one moment, please!" They followed him in, one sullen, the other red and snappy. My champion came to me, raised me to my feet, and, leading me to the wide open

window, drew back the curtain and let the full blazing light in upon me. "Look," he said, and he held up my hand to the light, which showed through it, as lamplight shows through the hand—only, alas! without the pinky hue. He touched my lips with his finger. "You see, gentlemen, they are as pale as her cheeks. But, see *this!*" he exclaimed angrily, and he lifted my lip to show the poor pale gums within. "There's not as much blood in her body as many a fish carries. Her pulse is a thread, her nerves are visibly a-quiver; she is taking no food other than a little milk or less broth; she has failed rapidly in strength since the first application of the iron. You have yourselves just told me of her immense exertion of will power, of nerve force, to endure that trial. Where do you expect her to find that power to-day? —tell me that! I believe in the *moxa;* I believe in it even for her—when *she is prepared to endure it.* Rest her—feed her—give her some strength, some blood, before you venture another tremendous shock to her nerves!"

"But," insisted Professor Ball, "our judgment is for the continuation of the *moxa* at once. Our preparations are complete and we will proceed. You shall see our success when——"

"You shall not proceed, monsieur!" interrupted Dr. Barker. "Colonel Piatt, take the little woman to her room, or—oh, excuse me, *we* will retire!"

They withdrew, but the door was left partly open, and oh, St. Patrick's day in the mornin'! As the argument there developed into a really respectable row,

Colonel Piatt said my cheeks flushed and light came back into my eyes, for you know one man against two is an inspiriting sight, and my doctor, who was doggedly determined, never lost his dignity—scarcely his temper, until in an outburst of rage, broken English and pure French combined, Professor Ball furiously ordered Dr. Belvin to light the furnace and at the same time himself advanced toward the room where I sat.

"Stop!" commanded Dr. Barker. "Courtesy seems wasted here—etiquette ignored! Don't you light that, doctor! I am an American—but I know Paris well! I know my rights perfectly! Our consul, our—oh, curse it, man, light that furnace and I'll throw you both over the balcony!"

"St. Patrick was a gentleman!" I softly hummed, for, you see, I profited whatever happened. If they failed to light up—I wouldn't be ironed that day. If they did light up—there'd be broken bones down there on the pavement, for Fordyce Barker was big enough to back a threat with action, and I—really, one believes in heredity after all. For my forbears, on the purely American side of me, though they gave no orders but obeyed them instead, died in their tracks wearing the ragged uniform of their country—just common men, of course, who, having nothing else to offer, gave their lives and had for reward so fierce a fight against odds, that it must be some far faint tang of its joy that thrills my poor nerves to delight whenever a man has his back to the wall—whenever hands are put up in a fair fight.

So, though he declared the scene simply outrageous and was visibly vexed at his own loss of self-control, Dr. Barker won. The other doctors retired, their properties with them, and I saw them no more. Dr. Fordyce Barker continued upon the journey he had delayed in the name of his life-long friendship for Colonel Piatt—and I, having followed his advice piously, was able to return home in September, from the first, the last, the only journey that since my marriage I have made without my husband.

I returned to find the evil prophecies of some Cassandra-like friends disproved utterly, completely. They had declared piteously, angrily, warningly, according to their individual temperament, that I was quite mad to think of marriage; that the public would have no further interest in me or my work. My original, first of all manager, Mr. Ellsler, wrote me that I would never see another full house of my drawing if I presented myself to the public as a married woman. Had I chosen an actor husband, then as Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so, we might, like Mr. and Mrs. Florence or Mr. and Mrs. Conway, slowly and painfully have attained to a doubtful popularity—but at the very beginning of a brilliant career to marry a man in private life would amount to professional self-effacement; he advised me to wait a few years. I recalled the fact that he had advised a ten years' wait before venturing into New York.

The remembrance of my engagements to appear that season at both of his theatres doubtless gave a certain edge to his very genuine fears, for no man

looks forward pleasantly to possible bad business, and though I argued patiently and smilingly, with all my croaking friends, insisting that an audience cared nothing for the woman behind the artiste; that I had never—to use the slang term—"travelled on my beauty"; that, anyway, the young unmarried male creature was but one of the component parts of the great public; that there were not only women but hundreds of men who admired the actress for the illusion she created, who studied her methods and praised or blamed without one thought of the desirability of the woman—all repeated over and over with unshakable, though entirely superficial amiability, for down in my heart there was hot anger, yes, and deep humiliation, too. This new and unpleasant view of the profession I honoured with all my heart offended me deeply. And though it might be the true one, I stoutly told myself that the popularity that could be destroyed by an honest marriage was a dubious thing well rid of, while all the time the ache of tears was in my throat at the prospect of such a loss.

So when, going straight from the altar, as I might say, to the stage in Pittsburg, I faced a packed audience whose reception rose from applause to cheers, I could have gone upon my knees in humble apology for the bitter thoughts and fears I had entertained. Yet my friend, doubting Thomas, gravely asserted that that was merely the greeting to a bride, that the enthusiasm was probably only momentary. But I laughed happily in his gloomy face and left him at last with full coffers at both theatres. And thus all

the engagements made for the unmarried actress, the married one had filled successfully, triumphantly. So that, in spite of broken health, managers considered me a very strong dramatic card—yet it required the *moxa* to teach me that the public had a heart. One stranger wrote: "The iron that burned your flesh made thousands writhe. The pallor of your face was reflected on the faces of men as well as women, as they read." Another, from halfway across the continent, wrote: "No man who ever saw you in 'Alixe' or 'Camille' would hesitate at going under the iron for you. The sweat runs down my face when I think of *you* having to endure such pain. If we could suffer vicariously for you an army would dispute for the privilege." But, most touching of all, a little boy wrote: "I saw you once in a play. In it they said you was not a very good woman, but I know you was and I'm only a little boy, but I wish I could be burned lots of times to make you better."

And so, from press and private letter, from North and South, from East and West, came the sweet assurance that the great many-headed public, with its alert ears and its jewelled eyes uncountable, its many hands, strong alike to build up or tear down, had a heart warm, tender, and opened to me in my sore suffering and distress. And it was this thrilling contact with the people's heart that gave back to me my queer nervous strength and my joy in work, with a too passionate desire to serve, unstintedly to serve, the public that had not cast me forth into outer darkness because I had married.

V

RIDDLE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: MR. HENRY BERGH

"Riddle me this—and guess him if you can."
—DRYDEN.

I SUPPOSE no great effort has ever been made for the improvement of conditions, for the advancement of the human race, that has not been met with bitter opposition, ridicule, and abuse from the people at large; but when the heroic reformer with a spark of Christ-like patience says: "Forgive them, Father, they know not what they do," and holding steadily, unswervingly to his course, reaches the goal, and, though weary and exhausted, establishes firmly the new and better condition of affairs, the people are apt to accept the benefits accruing, as a mere matter of course, and give no thought to the price paid by the reformer for his success.

To-day the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is a recognised power for good throughout the land. The most prominent, the most powerful men, the most gracious and influential women are proud to serve it; while the bright-eyed, observant babies of the entire country are its eager little agents and flying messengers.

It has offices everywhere, paid officials, agents, lawyers, doctors, workmen, ambulances, shelters,

machinery for rescue, and the merciful lifting and lowering of fallen beasts of burden. To-day all such work is done before approving and admiring eyes, but once it was a different story. For this society came into existence amid a very storm of disapprobation, with rumbling jeers and imprecations from the vulgar and debased, flashing with the sarcastic and malicious mockeries of the thoughtlessly indifferent. Infamous cruelty stalked rampant through the city. The brutalities familiarly witnessed on every hand were coarsening the fibre and hardening the hearts of the people, and thus lowering their spiritual standard. For so closely interwoven are the interests of man—made in God's image—and the gentle dumb creatures given to his service and his care, that cruelty and brutality to the patient beast of burden result in the debasing of the guilty man himself. Therefore this Society, in constituting itself the defence of the defenceless, truly served man as well as beast, in teaching him to control if not to conquer his savage instincts—his senseless furies.

In that splendid library, the Bible, one reads: "A grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and cast into his garden, and it grew and waxed a great tree." Yes, verily this Society has grown and waxed; it has become a great tree. One cannot imagine any storm uprooting or overturning it now. But how many of those who find rest and shelter beneath its giant branches give a thought to the man who cast the mustard-seed into his garden; who watched for the first slim lance of green thrust upward from the earth;

who nursed, tended, sheltered, and defended its slow, weak growth, who cultivated it with bleeding fingers, and watered it with his tears? How many give a thought to-day to the *founder* of this Society, so thoroughly approved by all classes?

I suppose everyone knows that Mr. Henry Bergh cast the mustard-seed into the garden, but how many people know anything of the personality of the man? How many know the moving cause of his great undertaking? How many, indeed! Better ask, does anyone know what moved him to enter the lists as sole defender of suffering animals; I shall wait long, I fancy, for my answer, for truly the man was a riddle, so let us guess him if we can.

Somewhere about 1605 or 1607 there was born into the world, through the brain of the Spanish soldier-poet Cervantes, the famous Don Quixote, that belated knight-errant who should have lived a hundred years before, and whose grotesque tilts and ludicrous encounters, in defending the oppressed and avenging imaginary wrongs, have sent laughter ringing through palace, camp, and home alike for nearly three hundred years. Laughter that is half denied by the sympathetic moisture of the eye; for this poor, transposed knight-errant is a very grave and honourable gentleman, trusted by his friends and loved by his dependents; and the purity of his motives lends to his utter inability to see things as they really are so distinct a touch of pathos that Sancho Panza is really needed to tip the balance to the comic side.

Who has not seen, who cannot recall the picture of

the Don—tall, gaunt, grave, hollow-eyed, and scant of hair, in ancient and imperfect armour, sitting astride bony Rosinante, and ready bravely to charge upon the windmill,—the humble and protesting Sancho Panza, broad as he is long, looking on from the back of the donkey, whose wisdom seems greater than that of both the men combined? Now this Don Quixote was a friend of my childhood. I used to walk at his side in fancy, and wonder quite piteously *why* he could not see what a dreadful mistake he was about to make—I being a very practical young person indeed, this dear, blundering, high-flown old Spanish gentleman of gallant spirit was a great care to me, and therefore, small woman that I was, I loved him much, and I—well, I think I care a great deal for the old Don yet.

One day, then, when I had been so long married that not more than two or three repetitions of my new last name were required to attract my surprised attention, my cockney parlour-maid, whose face flushed and whose tongue thickened curiously every afternoon, brought to me a card that startled me into reading aloud the name of "Mr. Henry Bergh."

"'Eavens!" cried the flushed Abigail, "I 'ope our 'Ennery hasn't done nothink to the 'osses! But 'e's an 'ard man, 's our 'Ennery, ma'am." And with a manner flatly contradicting her expressed hope, delightedly anticipating an immediate arrest, she proceeded to "show the gentleman up."

Advancing to greet my caller, I stopped short. I held the card of Henry Bergh, but I saw the tall,

gaunt form, the grave dignity of bearing, the hollow cheeks, the austere mouth, the piled-up brow—full two stories high—and the gentle eyes, sad to melancholy, of Cervantes' Don Quixote! I heard my own voice say low, "An incarnation."

He paused in his grave obeisance, sensitive as mirror to a breath, and said, inquiringly, "I remind you of someone, then?"

And, my jesting devil being ever at my elbow, I swiftly answered, "Yes, you remind me of a friend, dear and valued, a certain country gentleman from la Mancha."

At first he listened blankly, but at the word la Mancha pained recognition sprang into his eyes, and a slow, dull colour crept into the hollow of his cheeks. Terrified by what I had done, I rushed on: "But you are a Don Quixote whose courage and enthusiasm are not wasted upon windmills. You have the happiness of really defending the oppressed and avenging the cruelly wronged, instead of only dreaming of it." And, absolute sincerity being easily recognised, he took my offered hand, and we were at peace.

"Ah," he said, "you take a kinder and more gracious view of my resemblance to the absurd old Don than do the caricaturists of our papers."

And I laughed back: "My good sir, do you really imagine the millennium has begun, that you expect a jest without malice, sarcasm without venom, the light, swift stroke of a keen rapier from the fist that only knows how to wield a bludgeon?"

From the last word he shrank uncomfortably, saying: "He wished the 'bludgeon' of the caricaturist were the only one in active use in the city"; but when he gravely and carefully explained to me that "he was *not* a millennialist, could not, in fact, comprehend that peculiar form of belief," I understood that a sense of the ludicrous would never endanger his life through excessive laughter.

I was a hero-worshipper from away back and to my mind this man, who was making such a fine fight for the helpless, was a hero. Therefore I was filled with a sort of reverent curiosity, and both eyes and ears were set wide open for the catching of any scrap of information anent the "why" and "how" of that fight; and behold, the first item I obtained was, that Mr. Bergh would talk of almost anything under heaven—admitting a strong preference for the theatre—save and except Mr. Bergh.

That being the case, I carefully hoarded every casual remark, every stately compliment, every critical comment, every small confidence, every expressed hope of his, while my eager eyes were photographing features, poses, gestures, expressions, even half expressions. And now adding to these memories two or three anecdotes from one who knew and loved him well, I have my sole material for building up that trusted, honoured, ridiculed, hated, and abused bundle of contradictions known as Henry Bergh.

To begin with, he was by birth and breeding a gentleman, and that rare creature, an exceptionally tall man who, calmly unconscious of his height, moves

with natural ease. A well-dressed man, too, showing a quiet, unostentatious taste in colour and ornament, but such careful attention to good fitting and the small details of costume as made him seem especially well dressed. In his manner of grave and gentle dignity he could not have been excelled by any Spanish Don —the most courtly of men. His voice was gentle and low; his face, Quixote's face, long, pale, often immovable as a graven image, the piled-up brow crossed by a sort of dividing line; his eyes light, clear blue, and sad, while his brows had a trick of slowly lifting, now and then, that gave an inexpressible weariness to the face. Refined, intellectual, and cold, that was what he looked; and to myself I said, how deceptive must be the human face, for we are apt to associate self-sacrifice, generous devotion to another's welfare, with a certain warmth of heart, even of manner and expression, just as we associate a round, smiling face with good-humour, and more or less unconsciously we are given to the habit of judging others by ourselves.

Now, my love for animals is a veritable passion—crank and monomaniac are terms oft heard behind my back. Not merely is my love for *my* horse or *my* dog, but for everybody's horse or anybody's dog. My heart is a sort of Noah's ark where every conceivable four-footed thing is welcome with his mate. This must be true, else why does the lost dog spy me out in even a Broadway crowd, and ask me sobbing questions as to his missing friends and future fate? Why does the shamed, mangy cur creep forth to rub

himself against my best gown, when he would not dare approach within a quarter of a mile of any other woman's gown? Therefore I said, in my wisdom, how great must be the love of Mr. Bergh for animals! I pictured him as the owner of satin-coated horses, well-cared-for cattle, and with dogs galore, watching eagerly for his recognition and kind caress.

Then Mr. Bergh, making a second call, came upon me at the close of a romp with my two small canine idols. That he did not notice their extreme rarity and beauty surprised me somewhat, but when the largest —a three-pounder in weight—sprang upon the sofa, and laid a small, inquiring paw upon his knee, the man's whole body shrank away, and unmistakable repulsion showed in every feature.

Swiftly recalling that this man was striving earnestly to establish drinking places through the city for the heat-tortured dogs of the streets, I thought, "Oh, maybe, like many other men, he simply dislikes toys." So, catching the little beast up in my arms, I said, "You don't like him. Is it, then, because he is so small?"

"No, no," he nervously replied, "it's not that, not its size at all, but I—*I don't like dogs,* Miss Morris!"

Dumb with amazement, I stared a moment, then grabbed the other monster from her cushion, and carrying both to the next room, left them there, saying to myself the while, "Riddle me this, and guess him if you can." And let me say right here, that one who knew Mr. Bergh years to my days, who saw his

sacrifices, saw his sufferings borne in heroic defence of horses, tells me that never in his life did he see Mr. Bergh lay his hand upon a horse, in caress however slight; never saw him come to closer touch than by the taking hold of a bridle.

It is hard for the people of to-day to realise to what lengths the people of that day went in their furious opposition to the Bergh Crusade; and, strange as it may seem, the better classes were as bitterly intolerant as were the vindictive and cruel lower classes. Jeers, maledictions, threats of personal violence, of appeals to law, insults both veiled and open, he bore calmly, steadily, without outward sign of suffering or resentment; but there was another weapon turned against him, one difficult to parry, whose wound being poisoned rankles long—that weapon was ridicule.

Oh, small wonder that the poor French king cowered before the lampoon's cruel mockery; for just as trained soldiers, blood-drunk and in full fighting frenzy, will halt before the cold steel of fixed bayonets, waver and break, so will even ordinary men waver before derision. And this man, sagacious, sober, sound, was sensitive as any girl to mockery. The jibes, the jeers, the satire that made of him a laughing-stock were very hard to bear. Long after the power of the decent press was at his back in full strength, a snapping, snarling crowd of lesser publications pursued him with ribald jest and coarse lampoon, while at theatres he was often alluded to in the most farcical and grotesque way.

To show you how deeply it wounds a brave man

to be made the butt of a city's ridicule, let me, with reverent hand, draw back the curtain upon the picture of the private den of Mr. Bergh, where, with head bowed upon his bent arm in boy fashion, he sheds the slow, blistering tears of disappointed manhood, strained almost to the breaking-point—almost, but not quite, thank God! for he rose to go forth to his first triumph, to win a first sign of approval from the people who, through misunderstanding, detested him.

It was winter—the snow, generously sprinkled with sooty blacks, had suggested a city in half mourning. At some street corners the soiled, mud-stained mass had been heaped in banks. With insolent disregard of the law, salt had been lavishly used on the car-tracks. The great arteries of the city were congested—traffic was delayed by dangerous footing and narrowed roadways. The only thing that moved on at regulation speed in perfect security, was the profanity of the veteran horse-driver, whether enthroned on truck or car.

As Mr. Bergh came from his office, he found a radiant white city, bursting into blossom with a million lights. All harsh sounds were muffled by the snow-filled air. As he passed through the small park that seemed like a fairyland of snow and fire, his heart sank low, for he knew his city well—knew it was hungry now and hurrying to its dinner, and he was sure he'd soon find what he was looking for—trouble.

Like a well-dressed, sombre ghost he went striding

down the snowy street, and at University Place he found the thing he had expected—a car packed inside, almost to suffocation; both platforms packed outside, with men clinging like big burrs to bottom steps and dashboard rails; and before it, within a cloud of steam, two ill-fed, bony horses, with bloodshot eyes and wide red nostrils flaring, in their effort to fill labouring lungs with air—with heaving sides and straining backs and flanks—while their madly scrambling feet struck fire from the slippery stones, as they strove in vain to start again the awful weight behind them. Curses, oft-jerked bell, and assisting yells of passengers failed of effect. The driver's whip was raised ready for the stinging blow, when suddenly the straining effort ceased, the horses' heads drooped low, and through the thick air there loomed up before them a tall, dark form, with hand upraised commandingly. And calm and distinct, two laconic words reached all ears, "Stop! Unload!"

"Who the hell are you?" furiously demanded the driver. "And where's your authority for interfering with this trip?"

He knew well enough whom he was talking to, but silently Mr. Bergh turned back the lapel of his coat to show his badge (for in those days he had to do constabulary work as well as official), then repeated, "Unload!"

But being tired, hungry, and mad, the flood-gates gave way, and the passengers' wrath burst forth. Abuse, satirical comment, threats filled the air. To a few, who remonstrated decently with him, he ex-

pressed regret, but with grave politeness insisted on lightening the load, telling them they could see for themselves the utter inability of the horses to get them to the end of the line, and gently urged them hereafter to note the condition of crowding before taking a place on a car.

The conductor was especially ugly, and became unpleasantly demonstrative. His example worked like a leaven on the rest, and a spirit of riot began to show distinctly in the crowd closing about the tall, calm, self-possessed man. All faces scowled, evil names were tossed upon the air. He had just said, "You are yourselves increasing this delay; you might have moved two minutes and a half ago," when a scurrilous, great brute came close up to him and, with an unspeakable epithet, shook a dirty fist directly in his face. Without the flash of an eye or the quiver of a muscle in his quiet face, Mr. Bergh caught the ruffian by the shoulder, whirled him round, grabbed the seat of his breeches and the nape of his neck, and with a splendid "now all together!" sort of a swing, he fired him straight across the street, head-on, into the snow-bank.

A silence of utter amazement was suddenly broken by one great swelling laugh, and then followed the always thrilling sound of three gloriously hearty American cheers. Many men shook hands with Mr. Bergh before beginning their long tramp homeward; some admitted their error in aiding the overloading.

The carmen sheepishly resumed their places and the horses started the lightened car, and the friend

who had witnessed the incident here joined him, walking silently by his side, until at last in a low, moved tone, he said: "It's coming! Yes, I have faith to believe now that it is coming—the public recognition and indorsement of our efforts. Those people understood I was not interfering from mere love of meddling. Yes, I think they understood." And beneath his moustache the nervous quiver of his lips betrayed his agitation.

They understood, yes, but not what he thought they did. They understood that the man who had courage and also the physical strength to back it and make it interesting, and who could yet hold both in the leash of good breeding and self-control, was a man to listen to, and New York began to listen to him from that very night. *Toute âme rencontre en ce monde une oasis; c'était l'heure marquée pour lui!*

The same friend who walked by his side that snowy night has seen Mr. Bergh in passing through Fulton Market receive fair in the face the uncleansed lights of a slaughtered animal—flung deliberately by one of the furious butchers, the act receiving guffaws of laughter from the other butchers looking on—and Mr. Bergh wiped his face, which was immovable as a graven image, and passed on calm and cold and silent. Sometimes a visit to the chemist's shop was needed to have stains removed from his coat, but he made no remonstrance, and never used his power to arrest for malicious mischief, disorderly conduct, or for hideous profanity and vile language used in a public place. Only steadily, un-

flinchingly he arrested all the butchers who made the moving of living animals to the abattoir a slow progress of sickening horror and anguish. I only mention this feature of his hard struggle for the pleasure of saying that the time came when a long line of broad, extended hands awaited his taking whenever he passed the same butcher stalls, every man of whom declared that "what the old man said stood, and if it couldn't stand alone, why, they were behind it—d'ye see?"

But before that time arrived there came a dark, dark hour. The powerful press had taken up his cause—success seemed to smile into his eyes, when the money gave out. As yet no great support had come to the Society from the wealthy. Bequests were unknown, and the work he was doing required money, and a good deal of it. Shelter, food, care, medicine for the suffering creatures rescued from brutal taskmasters, had all to be paid for, to say nothing of salaries to lawyer, doctor, agents, etc. Without money the Society could not live. And then happened one of those things that we sneer at in stories for their unlikelihood. In a hospital, here in New York, a man lay near to death—a Frenchman he was, whose business had been for many years that of trapper and fur-trader. Living among and dealing with the Indians, he had seen such cruelties practised upon animals that memory was a horror to him. Either he had no family, or he had drifted away from it, for he was quite alone in his keen watch of approaching death.

To lighten the heavy hours, he looked at the pic-

tures in magazine or paper, and noting the many so-called " comics " Mr. Bergh was both subject and object of, he remarked one day to an attendant that " a white man with a pencil could be meaner than an Indian with a tomahawk," which led the attendant to speak of Mr. Bergh and his crusade at length to his interested listener, closing with a sigh and the remark that rumour said his work was greatly hampered by lack of funds.

A night of thought, and then a note went forth from the hospital asking if Mr. Bergh would call upon a patient there, by name M. Bonnard. Surprised, but ever courteous, he went. The sick man described the horrors he had seen, and then expressed his joy that someone had risen up to show the world that animals had some rights that demanded recognition and respect.

" You are cool and wise and determined. You will go far! " he cried.

And Mr. Bergh quite frankly answered " he could not go much farther without help."

" But," excitedly replied the trader, " I shall help you! I have not chased the dollar all these years without catching him—now and then. *Mon ami,* I am a lonely man. What is mine, is mine alone, to do with as I please, and raise outcry from no one. Only promise me that if you ever have the power to reach so far, you will extend your protection to the tormented wild things of the forest and plain, and what I have shall be at your service." And Mr. Bergh, thinking of some modest little sum from this lonely

hospital patient, thanked him cordially, more for his words of appreciation and encouragement than for the possible future gift, which would probably come too late to be of much service to the Society, and went his worried anxious way.

A few days passed, then, dazed and dazzled, he sat staring at a scrap of paper that held the trader's gift to him. M. Bonnard was dead, but he had kept his word, and had helped the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to the extent of nearly $115,000, or every cent he owned—a noble gift to a noble cause, with a touch of poetic justice about it, for from animals it came and to animals it returned.

Since that first saving bequest, many have honoured themselves in honouring the claims of the dumb and helpless creatures left to man's mercy; and when one thinks that in New York alone in *one single year* nearly 4,000 animals were suspended from labour and cared for, 552 disabled horses removed from the stony streets in ambulances, and 98,000 animals of all kinds, small and large, were humanely destroyed, while 56,000 cases were investigated, and 510 prosecutions were made, one begins to understand how vast is the labour of the Society and how great the need for help.

Mr. Bergh's sense of the ludicrous was conspicuous by its absence. (If you have to dissect a joke to explain it, it is apt to bleed to death in the operation, and dead things are never funny.) I never saw Mr. Bergh recognise a joke, and he was too honest to

pretend to see the point he was blind to; but after careful search I have found a man who will swear that Mr. Bergh did see a joke once, one directed against himself, and malicious though it was, he laughed right heartily.

A certain driver working for a wholesale firm in Vesey street gave much trouble by extravagantly overloading his horse. At last, finding himself so persistently watched, he began to behave better, and the *espionage* was lightened, when lo, Mr. Bergh, coming down town, met this man with a load of boxes so high that heads were turning all along the line of pedestrians to stare at it. Instantly the long arm was raised and the familiar "Stop! You're overloaded!" was heard.

"Why do you take advantage of my supposed absence to pile such a weight as that behind a horse?" asked Mr. Bergh sternly.

"It *ain't* too much for him!" growled the driver.

"Not too much?" cried Mr. Bergh. "Why, that load is almost two stories high! Lighten it at once!" And somewhat to his surprise, without the usual blasphemous offers to fight before yielding, the man turned slowly, the boxes swaying dangerously at their giddy height, and, with the following crowd, drew up in front of the firm's building. Now, had Mr. Bergh been a closely observant man, he would have suspected such ready obedience, and would, too, have noted the malicious sparkle in the fellow's eye and the pucker of his tobacco-stained lips, but he noted nothing save the frightful height of the

load. So the crowd looking on, hoping for a scrimmage, saw the man drop the restraining ropes and remove box after box. He paused, but Mr. Bergh, after a critical walk about the outfit, motioned him to go on and still further lessen the load. With a grin the man obeyed. The sidewalk was nearly covered with great piled-up cases, when Mr. Bergh called a halt, saying, "That will do; the horse can move that load with safety."

"He can that," replied the grinning driver. "He can move it widout strainin' hissel' inside or out, for ivery dom box is impty!"

Every soul in the crowd broke into laughter. As the Irishman climbed to his place, the guardian of animals looked at the empty boxes and then at the sturdy horse, saw the joke, and joined right heartily in the laugh against himself.

But he that laughs last laughs best, and the fun was not yet over; for Mr. Irishman, gathering up his reins, gave his cluck and loud "Git-up there!" all in vain. The horse turned his head, and giving Mr. Bergh one long, steady look, switched his tail, and stood stock still. The refusal to move that trifling load was utterly ludicrous, and someone yelled, "Look at de horse standin' in wid Bergh!" while another shouted, "Well, what kind of a beast would he be if he didn't lie to back up a friend?" and amid peals of laughter, Mr. Bergh himself took the animal's bridle and gave him a lead to start him, while the driver was pelted with hoots and jests till clear out of sight.

But it was in a certain incident occurring on Fourth Avenue and Twenty-second Street one morning that Mr. Bergh's conduct was the most like the conduct of the gentle and dignified Don from la Mancha, whom he so resembled in face and figure. Gloved, caned, perfectly gotten up, with flowering buttonhole and all, he was walking briskly to his office, when from behind him he heard such frantic mooing from a cow as told plainly of suffering and wild excitement, and now and again the weaker sound of the half bleat, half bawl of a very young calf.

He stopped, faced about, and saw a thick-set, sturdy man who, with the aid of a rope, resounding blows, and many oaths, dragged a struggling, protesting cow down the avenue, while hunger-crazed and thirsty, a weak-kneed little calf stumbled along trying to keep up with the frantic mother. Nor was the cow's misery merely maternal excitement—she was suffering cruelly. She was fevered, overweighted, her bag and udders so swollen, so distended that the milk dripped and trickled to the pavement as she moved, a condition, according to those who understand cattle, of excruciating pain. Hence Mr. Bergh to the rescue.

He halted the man and asked "Why he did not allow the cow relief?"

The man glowered stupidly, then sullenly repeated: "Relafe? Relafe? Relafe from what? I've druv' no finer cow thin that these five year!"

"You know she suffers," went on Mr. Bergh, "and so does that calf—it's weak with hunger."

The sulky drover was all the time keeping the small creature away from the tempting milk. "Hungry, is it?" he grunted. "Well, what of it? Sure, it's nothin' but a calf—it's no good!"

"Well, the cow's some good, isn't she?" went on the interfering gentleman. "Why don't you ease her pain? Just look at those dripping udders! It's shameful. Let the calf go to her!"

But fairly dancing with rage, the man refused, crying out that that condition would bring him a better bargain in selling the animal. Then Mr. Bergh declared officially, "This calf is going to—to——" Perhaps he did not know the technical term, or perhaps its sound was offensive—at all events, what he said was, "This calf is going to *breakfast right here and now!* Tie the cow to this hydrant! You won't? Do you wish, then, to be arrested?" and he showed his badge, and taking at the same moment the rope from the ugly, but now stupefied man, he himself led the cow to the corner and tied her with his own neatly gloved hands; and as the frantic moos had brought the neighbours to their windows, there were many laughing lookers-on at the unusual picture of an elegant and stately gentleman standing guard over a red cow with brass buttons on her horns, while her spotted baby calf began the milk-storage business with such reckless haste that the white fluid drizzled from either side of its soft, pink mouth, and the mother meantime, not to waste the blessed opportunity, hastily but tenderly made its toilet. And though to the human eye she licked the hairs mostly

the wrong way, the two most interested seemed to be satisfied with the result.

And there the tall man stood in patient, dignified waiting, while the enraged owner, with a few sympathising male and female compatriots, made the air blue about them—stood, until at last baby-bossy let go and faced about, when two long, contented sighs, and the calm glances of two pairs of big soft eyes told their protector his work was done and to their complete satisfaction. Then he loosed the rope, gave it into the owner's hand, and having in a public avenue superintended a young calf's breakfast and toilet, he calmly resumed his way, and all unrumpled entered his office, the whole thing being like a page torn from " Don Quixote."

That Mr. Bergh was fond of the theatre seems natural enough—it rests and amuses many busy men; but it did not seem so natural that a man of such marked executive ability, of such courage, tenacity, and endurance, should burn with an ambition to write plays. Nevertheless, that was the dear desire of his heart, and in spite of his cold reserve and stately dignity, he was willing—nay, eager—to sit as pupil at the knee of any earnest actress who would listen to his hopes and look at his work. For, much against my will, I must admit that the plays produced by that zealous and sincere student of the drama might well have been the lucubrations of a clever girl of sixteen years. For, believe me if you can, their one and only motive was ever—*love*. They were five-act raptures—not of strong, moving passion, mind you,

but of mere sentiment. A dramatisation of "The Children of the Abbey" would have been strong and turbulent by the side of any one of those plays I read.

And that was the work of the man who had faced a nation's ridicule, had bent the legislature to his will, and was educating a people to serve God and themselves by granting mercy to the dumbly suffering creatures about them.

Though my knowledge of Mr. Bergh came only from what I call a "parlour friendship," which, no matter how long, never equals a "working friendship," yet it must be remembered that I was studying him from the first with one object in view, to learn why he undertook the labour of his life. And I learned just what everybody else had learned: that the unspeakable cruelty of a Russian driver in a St. Petersburg street had first aroused his resentment. The *gendarme* had refused to arrest the brutal fellow. A crowd had threatened Mr. Bergh, and he had barely escaped maltreatment. Next day—he was Secretary of Legation there—he had donned some court dress and ribbons and orders, and going alone, back to the dangerous quarter, had picked out his man, who, grovelling at the display of supposed official power, was arrested and taken before the proper authorities. This opera-bouffe incident amused him not at all, and his description of the sickening brutality was given in the cold, even, undisturbed voice of disapproving justice.

And there I was—and here I am.

I have inquired from those who worked at his side, of those who to-day splendidly head the now powerful Society, and they know no more of that mysterious "why" than I do.

He was a cool, calm man. He did not love horses; he disliked dogs. Affection, then, was not the moving cause. He was a healthy, clean-living man, whose perfect self-control showed steady nerves that did not shrink sickeningly from sights of physical pain; therefore, he was not moved by self-pity or hysterical sympathy. One can only conclude that he was born for his work. He was meant to be the Moses of the domestic animal, meant to receive the "tables of the law" for their protection, and to coax, drive, or teach the people to respect and obey those laws.

How else can you explain that large, calm, impersonal sort of justice, that far-seeing pity that was not confined to the sufferers of the city's streets, but sent forth agents to protect the tormented mules and horses of the towpath; to search out the ignorant cruelties of the rustic, whose neglect of stock caused animal martyrdom—the incredible horrors of stabling in cellars and roofless shanties. Good God! the hair rises at the thought of the flood of anguish that man tried to stem and stop.

No warm, loving, tender, nervous nature could have borne to face it for an hour, and he faced and fought it for a lifetime. His coldness was his armour, and its protection was sorely needed.

"A grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and cast into his garden." How glad I am that God let

this man see the tree waxing and growing from the mustard-seed of his casting ere he departed and left his great work to others. And happy has Mr. Bergh been in having his work carried forward by brave and loyal men, who, while loving and honouring his memory, yet do this labour for its own sake.

Leaving bequests and giving great gifts, like automobiling, are the joys of the rich. I am a bread-winner only, but if I were a rich woman, how swiftly would I benefit this Society, whose work is so great, so far-reaching, and so continually needed. I would do it for pity's sake, for the beasts God has left dumb, and for sweet friendship's sake for Don Quixote II.—Mr. Henry Bergh. And, after all, I end as I began, " Riddle me this—and guess him if you can," for I confess I cannot.

VI

SARAH SIDDONS'S TRYST

SHE was an ancient crone, in very truth, who told this tale to me. An Englishwoman born and bred, whose whole life had been passed upon the stage—indeed, 'twas by the scant margin of one single hour that she escaped being born in the greenroom of a theatre.

Her father before her had been that thing we wonder at, "a strolling player," and had once been jailed by a country constable as a vagabond and mountebank, when he was giving "To be or not to be?" from a stage supported without unanimity by four unwilling barrels. But even so, stroller as he was, he had had his honours, he had climbed to a truly dizzy height; for through one never-to-be-forgotten week, in some far Scottish town, he had acted divers parts with that queen regnant of the British stage—that goddess of beauty—great Sarah Siddons. And when he died, the six old programmes of that golden week were the sole inheritance of his actress daughter; and when in her old age, while following the fortunes of her only son, she came to America, the vilely printed, yellowing rags of bills came with her, and were prized as other women prize webs of lace or ancient bits of silver.

She was an actress of the olden time, and knew the laws written and unwritten, and all the tricks of her trade. She "sawed the air" and mouthed her tragedy, tore her passion to tatters, and skipped and tittered through her comedy after the ancient fashion —but her memory was long and true. I liked to hear her broad-vowelled, full-throated talk; and, dear Heaven, but she loved the exercise! And so she often found me hanging on her words, my clasped hands resting on her broad knee, for she was a very *Falstaff* of a woman, who required especial chairs for her safe support; whose red and venous cheeks sagged heavily, and were but the redder from comparison with the white curls bobbing against them. And yet she drank her beer from a great stone mug at high noon each day, and again at midnight, and ate her cold beef and pickles and cheese—cheese—cheese, and laughed through all, her deep, side-shaking laughter, and gave no thought to yet increasing fat; but talked and talked and told of the power and the potency of the name of—Kemble.—Philip?—Charles? I know not now; I only recall clearly that night, when the heavy beating of the rain against the windows must have damped down her laughter, since she called me to her on my late return from the theatre, and with tender voice told me of another night, when she, a great girl of twelve, had sat upon her father's knee, when the country inn was chill and damp, and they could ill afford a fire, and he had wrapped her well in his old travelling cloak, and held her closer as the candle flickered in the draught,

and told her this story of England's idol, Sarah Siddons, and of the tryst she kept.

"Like many a one older and wiser than yourself," said he, "you think this woman whom the mob applauds and the great ones honour, has known but success and triumph all her life. But oh, my little maid, each goblet filled for human lips contains some bitter drops, and though hers held but few, they may have made the harder swallowing, because the bitterness lay upon the top, where should have been but dancing bubbles from the amber depths and all the froth and sweetness of her youth.

"But for her unwise marriage she might not have known that dreadful night, when the London that fairly crouches at her feet to-day struck fiercely at her. The groundlings' laugh, the gallery's hiss; 'tis hard even for a man to bear them, be he ever so thick of skin or tough of fibre, but for a woman of sensibility and pride—good God, it's like the flaying of her alive!

"Ay, my lass, though you open wide your mouth and eyes at the wonder of it, 'tis true withal, Sarah Siddons once felt the agony and the shame of failure, and for a few years, that must have seemed like ages in their passing, driven from the paradise of London-town, suffered in the purgatory of the provinces. Travelling, rehearsing, making her stage gowns; studying the lines of new characters while pressing an ailing babe to her breast; and acting, acting, acting all the time, good parts and bad parts, comedy and tragedy, she allowed herself no rest; and the

stinging lash that kept her to her work was the memory of the jeering laughter and the hiss that had come to her across the footlights that night in London-town, when she had perforce gone fasting to her bed, praying she might die ere the new day came, and the story of her defeat should reach the father and the mother who had cast her off.

"They had expected so much of her; they had talked so largely, in true Kemble fashion, of the triumphs she was to win—and she had failed, and they would be sore ashamed at the close kinship between them; and perhaps they might even rejoice now that her name was Siddons, since Kemble had ever been a synonym of success.

"Early in the next morning, young Siddons having sold his wife's best pelisse that he might pay their small score at the inn, they were about departing, when Sarah, all cloaked and hatted, stepped back to the room a moment, and her husband heard her whispering something there.

"'To whom do you speak, sweetheart?' he asked wonderingly.

"She looked oddly at him, and oddly she answered, 'I make but a tryst with the woman who has suffered here, a tryst I'll surely keep—anon!'

"She smiled wistfully, gave a last glance about her, then nodding her head, slowly she repeated, 'Anon! I'll keep my tryst, anon!' and left the room, the inn, and London-town.

"During those slow years of exile, while Sarah Siddons was toiling to make of herself an actress

great enough to justify her birthname, Kemble, time, too, oh, marvellous! was working *for* and not against her; delicately filling out certain hollows about neck and shoulders, changing angularities to lovely curves. Some there were who roundly vowed that she had even grown by inches, but that was drivel. Taller she was in sooth, but 'twas port and dignity that lifted her so high, not o'er-late growth of limb. And the voice, safe housed in her strong white throat, time was slowly but surely changing that. Clear and cold and penetrating it had been, but 'twas growing deeper, richer, and flexible as any singing woman's; while bitter memories of wounded pride and tender ones of early love, gave a touch of human tenderness, whose power was all-subduing—a tone of voice possessed by no other Kemble, however great or famous. Thus, time and the woman worked together to produce the great actress that was soon to conquer not merely England, but Great Britain.

"After several seasons of general work, she had decided to place her trust in tragedy alone, and she devoted herself to that class of play so successfully that people were already beginning to talk of her, when an incident occurred that worked to her great advantage. During one of her most woful scenes, a lady auditor was so overcome with emotions of pity and of terror, that she swooned away and was borne out to her coach. This testimony to Siddons's growing power was passed from lip to lip; by letter it travelled up to London, then bored and hungry for sensation. Next followed rumours anent the

grace and beauty of the young tragedienne, and big-hatted belles with arms thrust elbow-deep in modish muffs, listened with supercilious brows and curling lips to wigged and jewelled beaux who, snapping and tapping their snuffbox lids, profanely wondered how long the loutish managers meant to keep them waiting for a sight of the new actress, who, 'twas said, made other women in the play look like country wenches, so great was the beauty, where the colouring of a young milkmaid was added to the manner and the movement of a duchess royal.

"At last these plaints and court demands reached the managerial ear—for the London manager is adder deaf to all provincial claims—and lo! one day came a letter, blottily written on blue paper, sealed with scarlet wafers, that curtly offered to Sarah Siddons a brief engagement with a brief salary at Drury Lane Theatre, London.

"O, magic word! O, *open sesame* to all the good things of the world! To her London might spell a home, competence, social position, and, above all else, fame!—the one thing she was greedy for. And when her doubting husband murmured, 'Might she not fail again?' she turned upon him with cold anger, exclaiming, 'Sir, Kembles are not born to fail twice in a lifetime!' And when her letter of acceptance had gone forth, she nodded her head gently, and, as if answering one who importuned her, said: 'Anon! I'll keep my tryst with thee, poor heart! Anon! Then only can we rest.'

"And though her words filled with amaze the lov-

ing, jealous husband, he dared neither question nor catechise.

"And then had come that night, when at old Drury Lane the rank and fashion and brain of London-town, in a very transport of approbation, had seen a woman, as true and pure as she was rarely beautiful, put forth her strong, white hands and secure the magic flower of *success!*

"It was the night when the privileged stare of George of Wales, having ended in flushed and smiling admiration, the new actress had been caught up to the very heights of fashion. The night, my child, when as *Belvidera,* in old Tom Otway's play, 'Venice Preserved,' 'twas said she thrilled the audience with her beauty, she froze it with terror at her madness, and melted it again with her three wordless cries of sorrow.

"Ah, it was a wondrous night! And there were posies and messages and cards, from my Lady This and That, and by and by the regular habitués of the greenroom were crowded to the very walls by the headlong surge of London's greatest men, who wished to offer homage to the newly-risen star, while finally the powerful Lady North invited Sarah to sup with her that night.

"Now Mr. Siddons loved the nobility with all his soul, and with obsequious gratitude would have accepted this invitation for his wife had she not swiftly interfered, saying she had a previous engagement, and no, it could not be broken. Her humble duty to her ladyship she would gladly make at any

time appointed—only should she break her solemn pledge, the great Lady North would in her heart think ever poorly of her servant.

"And so majestic was her manner of speaking, that the messenger went back to Lady North and told her Siddons was well worth waiting for, and far too rare a creature to crush incontinently.

"Early in the evening Mr. Siddons had seen his wife sending forth a messenger, but he was too much occupied to inquire for what purpose. So when they left the theatre, he was surprised to find her turning in the wrong direction. He corrected her rather shortly, for the memory of that rejected supper invitation rankled still. But she made stern answer: 'We go to our old lodging for an hour. I have my tryst to keep!'

"And while he glared at her in astonishment, there came to him the picture of his wife, standing hatted and cloaked, whispering to the empty room, and a chill creep came into his blood as though she were uncanny.

"'Twas a poor place of entertainment, and as they made their way to the well-remembered room, he gave thanks to the gods that better things had come to them at last.

"All her life Sarah Siddons had been called a cold, cautious, and most politic woman, but on that one night she seems to have yielded herself utterly to sentiment. Her husband, having closed the door, turned to find her standing in the middle of the ill-lit room, looking down upon the table, where was

roughly served a crusty loaf, some cheese, and old brown mead, and he cried out, 'Was it for *this* you turned your back upon light and luxury, wine and brilliant company?'

"But she answered: 'Nay! 'twas for the woman who sorrowed here that awful night.'

"His eyes sank before her brilliant gaze, and suddenly he saw that there was a wonderful running together of opposite things. This radiant creature, with rose-flushed cheeks, was *Success* personified—*Success,* thrice triumphant! In youth, in beauty, and in art, great Sarah Siddons! And yet how close in point of time she came to that other creature crushed and forlorn, who bore the same name; and he began to understand, though dimly, why they were there again.

"'Do you remember,' she asked, 'the woman who suffered here? She was so young—spoiled, too, and misled by home praise and large talk of her great gifts, but brave and very hopeful; and she strove so hard to win success, and smiled and struggled on, until her courage broke against a brutal hiss? Dear God, that hiss! It entered at the portal of her ears, and burning like liquid fire, made circuit of each chamber of her brain, then followed the coursing blood until to the very soles of her weary feet she glowed with shame! 'Twas here she fell, with arms outstretched across this table, and hid her face from view. And then suddenly, her worn, neglected body craving nourishment, she put forth her hand for food, but found neither bread nor cheese

nor wherewithal to purchase them! And so she went fasting to her bed; but in the morning, ere she left the cruel city, she had made solemn tryst with that suffering Sarah Siddons who had failed, and promised that if ever triumph came, if ever she won success, as famous Sarah Siddons, she would return to that same room and sup full with her, and pride and gratitude might drive away the memory of that hiss! Now she is keeping faithfully her promised tryst.'

"At which the husband lifted the stone mug, poured the mead, and, gravely, on one knee, offered it to the great woman who was his wife. But though his heart was very tender to her, the creeping chill was in his blood still as she leaned across the table, and with ineffable gentleness said: 'To you, poor heart, I drink and bring to you *success!*'

"And he was truly a grateful man, when she in her turn filled the mug, and holding it to his lips, smilingly commanded him to drink, 'To the continued success of the favourite, Sarah Siddons, and your loving wife, sir.'

"And then," said my very old informant, "my father wiped his eyes with an enormous red silk handkerchief, and said, 'A prodigious creature, my child—prodigious! And you can see she was a brave woman, too, for it was not an easy thing to do, to refuse an invitation from nobility at a time when actors were a little lower than the beggars!' Yes, prodigious is the word, for the gentle and strong, the beautiful and great—old England's idol—Sarah Siddons."

VII

GARFIELD

DURING one of my many visits to Washington, an odd little incident occurred anent the late James A. Garfield. As a frequent guest of the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. Donn Piatt, I had had the pleasure of meeting many wise men from the North, South, East and West, and fair women, too, from as many quarters; and as Colonel Piatt was an Ohio man, it seemed perfectly natural that he should find a boon companion and close friend in that other Ohioan, the big, gentle Garfield—whom I came to know, regard and heartily admire.

But to make my story intelligible, I shall have to go back a good many years, to a time when my mother had accepted a situation in the country as housekeeper for an old, old man and his middle-aged son. The big old lonely house standing in a grove of locust trees had been visited again and again by Death, until at last, only these two men grimly faced each other in the bitter silence of hatred. For yoked together as they were by blood and circumstances, the older man had ever been cruel and unjust, a wicked man within the law, and it is quite astonishing how wicked one can be without actually breaking the law, if one is possessed of a devil and is cunningly malicious. So this eighty-five-

year-old " cruelty " sat at one side of the enormous fireplace and chuckled viciously and audibly over the torment of the forty-year-old son—a new-made widower, who hid his sorrow and sat in sullen patience at the other side of the hearth keeping a watchful eye upon the hound that crouched at his side, lest bodily hurt come to it from the enemy opposite.

Into the great, echoing old house my mother and I came. There was no building save the barn in sight. The school was closed, so, but for the hound, Judy, a stiff old shepherd dog, Roy, and my own few books, I should almost have gone melancholy mad.

Uncle Harry, as the younger Mr. Freeman was generally called, one day loaned me a book. I was delighted beyond words, and even when I went outdoors, for a week I carried the book with me. The sap was running in the maple trees, snow-covered but thinly the ground and patched the great grey boulders. The joy of the sugar-camp was at hand. I had moulded maple sugar in teacups, in little patty pans, in egg shells, in everything I could think of. I had one bright morning two fingers bandaged on one hand and a thumb on the other, because of sugar burns, while a bright new patch on my old frock told of yet another burn, and the wrath of my mother having been turned against me on account of these accumulated mishaps, I had been forbidden the pleasure of the camp. Therefore I had taken my book and a large cake of maple sugar, and calling upon Judy the elastic, and Roy the stiff, to follow, I had gone forth to kill time as best I could.

After a wild race that ended with the hound far ahead, me in second place and Roy well behind the field, I conversed with them on various topics, they nearly wearing their tails out in excited approval of my ideas. Then noticing the extreme whiteness of Judy's teeth, which she almost wholly exposed in her doggish smile, I remarked: "You should have been called Sweetlips instead of Judy, and Roy, if you had not been too old I bet you a penny, Uncle Harry would have called you Garfield—for that's the name of the man he's always talking about, whenever anybody comes here. It's just Garfield—canal, and Garfield—man, and Garfield—speech, and Garfield—oh, you beast!" for Roy had thrust his nose into my apron pocket and grabbed the cake of sugar. But his stiff old legs gave out quickly. I rescued the sugar and with the calm indifference of childhood wiped it off with my apron and returned it to my pocket. But when Judy began to nose it violently I felt that discretion was the better part of valour, and looking about vainly for another place of safety, I held my book under my chin, while I climbed up to the top of a high rail fence. There I turned laboriously, tucked my red calico dress under me to mitigate the severity of that top rail and seated myself, straightened my hood, opened my book, and with a dog on hind legs on each side of me, I fairly shared the sugar with them while between bites I read a harrowing story of slavery. I had been there some time, for the cake of sugar had become a mere crumbly bit, so hard to divide into three portions that I yielded to the urgent

pleading of a pair of dim brown eyes on one side of me and a pair of brilliant topaz ones on the other, and broke the fragment in two pieces and as they were crunched to powder by sharp white teeth, from up the rough and rutty road, there came the loudly cried: "Gee—gee haw!" that announced the approach of an ox-team.

Instantly six interested eyes, blue, brown and yellow, turned in that direction, for under some circumstances even a passing load of wood is worthy of attention.

Presently there turned into the road from a cross lane a pair of red and white oxen, swaying patiently beneath their heavy yoke, whose guide, tall and broad, did a great deal of shouting, but almost no goading, for which I liked the man whose face I had not yet seen. Both dogs left me at once and hastened to inquire into the treatment and general condition of the steers and to look under the waggon to see if there might be a dog there, as country etiquette required, and finding an ancient brindled watchdog, there followed a great waving of tails and a general exchange of salutations, and Judy being but a scatter-brained, flighty young thing at best, spatted her hands with lightning quickness before him and invited the newcomer to race her, but he only pressed closer to the off-steer, looking him over anxiously and pretending not to have heard her embarrassing invitation—the young are so thoughtless at times. Later on, he and Roy, who was his contemporary, found a dry and sunny spot where they sat down and talked of the

wonderful tenacity of rheumatism when it settled in a dog's shoulder.

Meantime the man approaching, called loudly: "Halloo! halloo!" toward the house. No answer coming, he halted his steers and stood still, looking doubtfully over toward the barn. He was in dress the typical countryman, big and broad shouldered, his trousers legs tucked into his boot-tops, his thick coat fastened close about his middle with a leather strap never meant for a belt, an enormous pair of greyish blue mittens on his hands, a comforter of amazing length and fighting-mad colours wound about his throat, and a cap with ear tabs on his head, a cap whose dark brown colour accentuated the yellowish blondness of his hair—all that was countryman. But in the big, ruddy, full-moon face, with the wide, eager, blue eyes, the bold, well-formed nose, the kindly smiling lips, all seeming to radiate vitality and energy there was no country stolidity—far from it. As his wandering eye returned from the barn, the dogs clambering back to me again, drew his attention to where, like a red woodpecker, I perched on the fence.

"Oh!" he exclaimed. "Say, little girl, is Freeman at home?"

I looked at him, and gravely asked: "Which one—Jedediah or Uncle Harry?"

The ruddy face quivered for a moment, then the answer came: "Uncle Harry."

I shook my head regretfully: "He's away—I wish he wasn't!" Then I continued. "Mr. Jedediah

Freeman's home"—with a sigh—"I wish he wasn't."

What a shout of laughter came from the stranger's great throat. The wind fluttered over the leaves of my story just then and the laugh ended abruptly, the big blue eyes sparkled.

"I-is that a book?" he asked. "Are you reading it?"

"Of course, I am," I replied with offended dignity.

"Oh!" he exclaimed. "What is it about, eh? is it good?"

"Well," I replied with a critical twist of my hooded head, "n-no—it's not so very good." Then hurriedly. "Of course, all books are some good. This is called "Dred, or the Dismal Swamp," and it's kind of shuddery, you know; but it's not like my two best books."

He came quite close to me and asked in the most interested manner: "Which are they—your two best books, Sissy?"

And I answered swiftly: "Jane Eyre" and "Robinson Crusoe."

He lifted up his voice again in hearty laughter, while he smote the rail a blow with his fist that set Judy frantic with excitement, and then he cried:

"Good! Good for you, little girl! I back your judgment in books. But who are you anyway? You can't be a country child?" He looked toward the house and then suddenly answered his own question: "Why, I guess you must be the daughter of old Jedediah's housekeeper—that's who you are."

"Well," I returned rather testily, "I can guess too, and I guess you are my Uncle Harry's Mr. Garfield—that is if you ever make speeches."

He caught my face between his big mittened hands and laughed as he rocked me so from side to side: "I tell you what, little one, if I had a faster team here, I think I'd run you off."

"Where to?" I asked.

"Oh!" he answered, "to some place chock full of books. Would you go?"

And being a miniature woman, I shook my head violently, while smiling a distinct consent.

He glanced up at the farmer's clock—the sun caught up his goad and started up his oxen. The brindle broke off his conversation with Roy to make a swift investigation of the soles of my shoes and the condition of our barn-yard gate before hastening to take his proper position under his waggon. Then I demurely remarked: "You didn't want me to tell Uncle Harry anything then, did you?"

"Good Lord!" cried the driver. "I clean forgot! Please tell Freeman not to fail Garfield at the meeting to-morrow night, at Aurora! Remember, little girl, *Aurora*—not at the schoolhouse, that's too small! *Aurora!* Good-bye!" And with much creaking and rumbling the waggon moved in response to the efforts of the red and white steers, who swayed and shambled and gee'd and haw'd in patient obedience to the big, kind voice that directed them. Once he turned and looking back saw me standing on the fence ready to jump, while the dogs wildly leaping up

in front of me made the jump impossible. And so with a last Homeric burst of laughter, the young Garfield of the farmer period passed out of my life, to enter it again years later, through the doors of a Washington drawing-room.

The country being very interesting and the roads fine about the city I had had my saddle-horse sent on from New York and with my host and some of his friends I enjoyed many delightful and some rather exciting rides—especially that wild rush to escape arrest at the hands of the police, I, as a stranger, having tangled my horse all up in the red tape so plentiful at that time in the park at the Soldiers' Home. Mr. Henry Watterson suggested that we run for it. We did, and the policeman proved he was better mounted than we had believed. We escaped, but at the same time we had a race well worth remembering. One day as Colonel Piatt was about to lift me from my horse, he noticed a gentleman was leaving his door, and called out as his face lit up with pleasure: "Oh, I say, old fellow, go back! go back! We'll be there in one second! I want to see you!"

And as I slipped from the saddle, he added to me: "There's the man I particularly wish you to know." Then in the hall: "Oh, don't go to your room, no one minds a little dust and a few flecks of foam!" and there in the drawing-room doorway appeared stalwart, well-groomed, well-dressed a personified geniality; and a jesting voice was presenting the Hon. James A. Garfield.

I drew the bridle-worn gauntlet from the hand I

offered him and as he raised his head from a courtly salutation his big blue eyes looked fairly into mine and the words he was pronouncing trailed away into silence. He looked fixedly at me; a worried, puzzled expression growing on his face. Then with a start and an embarrassed stammer, he completed his greeting.

After a little I withdrew to dress for dinner, and I was scarcely out of the room, before he called out: "Where have I seen that little woman before—will someone tell me that?"

Mrs. Piatt said: "On the stage of course."

"No—no!" he objected. "That's not it. When I looked into her eyes just now, I knew I had looked into them before, yet I couldn't quite catch the memory where or when. Oh, laugh—but I tell you I'll trace that memory out yet—you see if I don't."

As time went by and I came to know something of him, it goes without saying that I liked him. One of General Garfield's most attractive traits was his enthusiasm. Whatever he did, was it work or play, he did with all his heart, the big warm heart that held so many, yet scamped no one of their share of love. He was so proud of his wife—that's always a good sign in a man. He gave me the pleasure of her acquaintance and I found her a woman of most wide reading and deep thinking; well informed, clever, but apparently a human sensitive plant. In the bosom of her family she was brilliant, but at the faintest touch, even the touch of the world, she shrank into silence and an absolute timidity of manner. Yet she was to her big husband guide, philosopher and friend. His

literary idols were Dickens and Shakespeare. He quoted from them almost continually and I stood even with him in knowledge of Dickens, but he was head and shoulders above me in Shakespeare—for my slight study of him had been confined to the acted plays, but Mr. Garfield knew him from cover to cover. There was no pose about it, he had studied Shakespeare because he loved him, and loved him because he had so long studied him. Our arguments over *Lady Macbeth's* character were many and warm, and whenever I won a momentary advantage, he had a funny way of bending down his big brainy head and violently shaking it, exactly after the manner of a great St. Bernard, shaking its head free from a too annoying fly. But whenever or wherever I met him he was tormented by that conviction of having seen me before.

"Confound it, I even feel an impulse to call her by her first name!" he said impatiently to Colonel Piatt. Again he remarked: "If we have ever lived in some other world—why I must have seen her there."

At last it became evident that his tantalising impression of some former meeting was always strongest when we were out of doors. At such times his almost boyish laugh would cease; his clever banter falter into silence, while his blue eyes would take on a look so tense and sometimes so troubled, that often I was tempted to give him the clue he was searching for; but a mischievous desire to see if he would ever find it for himself kept me silent. He spoke of his odd

impression to some of his friends, asking if they had ever had a like experience; and it often happened that as he left the theatre after a performance someone would hail him with the laughing question: "Well, have you caught up with her yet?" or, "Have you secured the date of that first meeting?"

Then there came an evening when at a dinner given by Mrs. Piatt, I found myself sitting exactly opposite Mr. Garfield. The company was not a large one but it boasted some famous names and at least one brilliant beauty. Carefully chosen, the guests seemed charmed with one another; coldness and restraint were notable by their absence; conversation was brilliant and laughter was light, when turning my glance a moment from the Southern senator at my side, I looked full into the fixed, wide blue eyes of Mr. Garfield. He was leaning forward, one hand tightly clenched lay on the table. From the strained faraway look he turned upon me, I knew in a moment he was again searching for that memory, and as I gazed into his unwinking eyes, the buzz of talk and laughter turned into a murmur of wind through leafless trees. I saw pale winter sunshine falling across some snow-patched fields. Leaning a little toward him, in a very low but distinct tone I said: "Gee—gee haw!" A flash like blue lightning snapped into his eyes and as I added, "Is Freeman at home?" he gave a cry, almost a shout and striking a blow upon the table that set the glasses and small silver all a-dancing, he cried:

"I've found you! I've found you at last, and you're sitting on top of the fence in a red calico dress

with a book in your lap!" Then in the midst of the commotion he had raised, he threw his arm about Colonel Piatt crying: "Ah, you thought I was meat for an asylum—you know you did! But I have found her out at last—so you see I'm not half as crazy as you thought I was!"

Questions rained upon him and much laughter followed his story of that faraway meeting on the country road, but one grave old gentleman (Judge Holt) questioned us earnestly in the drawing-room as to what was in both our minds at the moment in which I spoke. I was not much surprised to hear Mr. Garfield say, that in his backward search for a clue to the tormenting half memory, he had got as far as Cleveland and failing to find me there was hopelessly trying Aurora, and the country around there, when I spoke.

VIII

THE SHADOW OF THE TEMPLE

WE were playng our way westward to California. The next week we were due at Salt Lake City, a favourite halting place of mine. Now we were in a small town in that State of many marvels—Colorado. The men were mostly at work in a mine or mines at some little distance from the town itself, so its streets had a very quiet air during the business hours of the day. Everything about the place seemed to have the quality of crystal purity. The air—the wondrous sky—the sparkling water; while the mountains took strange forms and like stupendous beasts *couchant* against the distant blue, seemed ready to rise at some dread command and descend with world-jarring steps, into the valley, to destroy the pigmy toilers there. And in that distant quiet little mountain-town I found the woman, who said to me with trembling lips: "You see—I'm standing in the shadow of the Temple—so cannot be safe!"

We, my husband and myself, had started to drive to the "Garden of the Gods." The carriage came to grief before we were outside the limits of the town, and we got down, my husband and the driver to look for aid, while I walked up and down, past a row of one-story cottages, occupied by miners and their families. Most of them bore all the dog-ears of wasteful

poverty—of laziness and neglect. Two or three were fenced about, but most of them stood in a wild waste of empty tins and broken yellow crockery; but at sight of the last cottage in the line I stopped, stock-still; it made me think of some sweet gentlewoman holding her spotless skirts about her and hesitating at the entrance to a foul alley—so clean and well-curtained its windows were; so neat its scrap of yard. As I looked I saw the edge of a curtain gently, gently drawn aside, and knew someone was peeping at me. All down the line, bare-armed, frowsy-headed women had stood openly and gazed, this person was more cautious. As I returned on my slow march up and down, to pass the weary waiting, the door of the pretty house opened and a small woman in a black dress and a checked apron stepped out and opened her gate, and as I came abreast of it, she bowed and asked me would I not come in and sit down as I seemed to be waiting for someone; and "Oh, if you please," she finished, "are you not from the East—I can't be mistaken, you are an Eastern woman—aren't you?" As I answered, "Yes," I saw her turn her head aside and wipe quick tears from her eyes. I entered her little home and sat down in wonderment. It was the very flower of cleanliness. The floor was immaculate—one strip of carpet lay before the bed—one braided rag rug lay beneath the rocker. There was very little furniture—no heavy pieces like bureau or wardrobe—everything cheap; but in one window were two shelves of flowers, that fairly laughed, so lusty, strong and bright they were—not a spindling

stem not a yellow leaf among them; while on a little table, by the worn old Bible, stood her evident pride and delight, a rose bush, whose two fat buds had already streaks of rich red on their sides, showing how hard it was for them to restrain the riotous colour and perfume within.

I had not been one minute in the room when I saw my hostess was a woman of ruined nerves. At the tiniest sound her blue eyes would widen suddenly, painfully—she would glance swiftly over her shoulder; then she would smile deprecatingly. She kept the white curtains nearly closed and she *never* passed the window without a second's pause to glance anxiously into the empty, quiet street. I had given her my name and had learned her own was Mrs. Mary Wilton. As we talked I had taken off my glove. On that hand I had a foolish little ring a girl friend had lately given me; a plain band of gold, almost covered with a dark blue enamel that in some lights looked black. Her eye fell upon it, and taking it for black, she bitterly exclaimed: "That's the thing we ought to have for our wedding rings!"

"'We?' Who?" I asked, and she replied: "Oh, we Mormons!"

I started violently: "Why, Mrs. Wilton," I cried, "are you a Mormon?"

"Well, I'm a Mormon's widow—I suppose it's as broad as it's long!"

"And," asked I, "do the people here know you are a Mormon?"

She shut her hands spasmodically—she passed her

tongue over her pale lips: "I hope not," she whispered, "Oh, I hope to God, they don't! What's that?" she held up her finger warningly. I had heard nothing, but she had. Her eyes were wide and frightened. She crept cat-like to the window, glanced out, then turned a face like death to me and drew softly away into a corner. I rose and went to the window and looked out openly, while from behind me came her whisper: "What do you see?"

"Only three men," I answered. "They look like cattlemen."

She groaned: "There are no cattlemen here—so they are strangers! Would you know any one of them again?" she asked.

"Yes," I said, "for one is very tall and has red hair and to me his beard looks uncommonly like a false one!"

I had not thought my words would do more than provoke a smile; but instead they seemed to throw her into a very anguish of terror.

"It is the end!" she gasped. "It is the end—I have felt it for days! Now I am sure, *sure!* Are they looking this way—do they notice this house?"

I glanced at her ashen face and at the throbbing in her throat, and slowly and pityingly, I told my lie. "No, they are just talking among themselves, and wandering along, as I was wandering, when you took me in."

Now, in point of fact they were to all seeming an evil group and they had looked long and carefully at the house, until I had drawn the curtains wide and

looked back at them—then they turned away and moved down the hill. The woman took a corner of her apron and wiped her wet palms and beaded forehead. I stood before her in wonder. "Mrs. Wilton," I asked "what is it that frightens you so?"

She looked up at me: "Do you know Salt Lake?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Well," she continued, casting that nervous glance behind her as she spoke, "I am standing in the shadow of its Temple, and I shall never be safe—until I'm in my grave!"

My face betrayed my thought: "No," she answered, "I'm not insane; but the Mormon arm is long—the Mormon punishment is certain!" She shivered in the sunlight, and added low: "And the mark was set against my name four years ago!"

"My poor woman," I said, "your nerves are completely shattered, or you would know all this is folly!"

She looked up gently, patiently at me and asked: "Do you know the Book of Mormon? Have you studied the Holy Doctrine of Plural and of Celestial Marriages? No! Nor do you know the secrets of the Endowment House, nor the terrors of the Danite Vow!"

I broke in upon her, saying: "I know there are no Danites now, nor any other body of men who would dare close their ceremonies by standing up and publicly swearing that 'If any man attempted to leave the country, or pack his things for that purpose, any of the Covenanters seeing it should *kill him,* and haul

him aside into the brush—so his burial should be in a turkey buzzard's gizzard!'"

"Ah," she cried, "you are quoting the very words!"

"Yes, I had them from a near friend, who withdrew from the Mormon Church because of enforced polygamy!"

She leaned forward eagerly: "How did he do it? Where did he go?" she asked.

"He got slow consent to his making a trip, on important business."

"Ah," she cried proudly, "the East—there's safety! That was a wise man, that friend of yours. I wish to Heaven, I was there! I should be safe, too!"

"But," I insisted, "that is all past, there are no Danites now, I tell you! There are no murderous executions of people who withdraw from the faith!"

She smiled a faint, pale smile and in the conciliating tone one uses to a fractious child, she answered: "No. No. There are no Danites now—no public, hideous vows—no killing in broad day; but the Danites left sons and sons' sons, and a principle that lives and acts in secrecy is strong and terrible! No, there are no punishments by murder now, but," she laughed a dry, mirthless laugh and glanced hurriedly over her shoulder, "but it's astonishing what strange *accidents* befall the people who leave the Mormon Church!" I heard a clatter of hoofs outside—the mended carriage rattled up to the gate.

We had just agreed, that for a certain sum, Mrs. Wilton should "do up" two or three delicate lace-

trimmed articles used on the stage, when we were interrupted by the fright the men had given her—now I returned to the subject. But she shook her head—she was willing to go to my private-car—in which we were living that week—for the articles, but since she had seen the strangers she was afraid to go through the streets alone after dark—and it would be nightfall when she would have returned the things to me. I promised her the protection home of the porter—a stalwart yellow man—if she would come, and she agreeing, I drove away from the little cage and its fluttering inmate.

As we rattled down the long hill, I caught a glimpse of the three men, they were at the foot of the street. They were questioning a small boy. One of them pointed at Mrs. Wilton's cottage as he spoke, and two looked at each other and laughed. My heart sank like lead—my palms moistened suddenly—I had caught Mrs. Wilton's disease—*I* was frightened!

It must be confessed that I gave a divided attention to the weird and marvellous beauty of the great Park, well named "The Garden of the Gods." My thoughts were busy more than half the time with that lonely hard-working woman, back there in the town; who was killing herself with fear of imaginary foes—though to her they were real enough, poor soul!—and I wondered if she would keep her word and come to the car; and if she came, I wondered if she would tell me anything about her simple, honest, kindly self—for I felt she was a good woman, however mistaken she might be.

I was glad to get back to my elongated, movable home, and curled myself up in the cushions to take a needed rest before the light dinner that preceded the heavy performance of the evening—and was barely established there, when the porter came informing me that " Mrs. Wilton was there with the lace things and did I care to receive her? " " Yes," I answered. I did indeed care!

She entered the drawing-room, I saw her blue eyes, for the moment calm and clear, a flush of colour on her cheeks, her lips red and parted with quick breathing, from her hurried walk in the cold air; and I realised suddenly what a very pretty woman she had been, but a few years ago.

I settled the little business matter between us, and then shut out the waning day; had lights brought also and an easy chair and as we sat in that close-curtained seclusion, the lamps burning warm and bright above us, a tea-pot cosey-covered between us,—it came about that she spoke and I listened, while she told me how for seventeen blessed years she had lived in her native state, Vermont, and then she said her father had grown dissatisfied and they had gone West—a terrible undertaking in those days. Misfortune followed them closely from the first, and over and over her mother had begged that they stop at this place or that, and settle down and make a home. But, no—the father went ever further on—growing poorer by almost daily accidents and losses, until one brilliant sunny morning he met the great loss, and Death called a halt, for the wife and daughter at least, while

the father journeyed on alone into the land we always imagine dark with shadows. For ignoring warnings and advice he had tried to ford the river from a point of his own choosing and had paid for his obstinacy with his life.

The people they had fallen in with were kind, but they had no reason to travel further so they remained at the little settlement on the river, where the mother, already broken in spirit by removal from her old home, sank under the shock of her husband's death, and in two short months lay beside him under the shade of the ragged, unkempt cottonwood tree—and she, the daughter, was alone in the world—so alone, that when a few months later John Walter Purser asked her to marry him, she perhaps accepted him with less careful consideration and thought than she might have given the subject under other circumstances.

It was only the day before their wedding that he lightly remarked: "Oh, Annie, I belong to the Mormon Church, you know!"

Shocked—she had cried out that she would have nothing to do with Polygamy, and he had laughed and said she could have no less to do with it than he, since he would have nothing to do with it at all; and he assured her that Plural Marriages were a reward for the High and Mighty of the church, not for poor devils like himself. She reminded him of a miserably poor Mormon family, who had passed through the settlement lately—a family consisting of a man, four wives and many children, and he had answered: "If

a poor man was fool or brute enough to want a lot of wives, the Church could not very well forbid to one what it offered to another—but what he meant was, that there was no *compulsion* about the Plural Marriages—it was purely an individual matter to be settled by individual judgment, taste or conscience. It was not a *law* of the Church, to be enforced, or he would not be a Mormon!"

He little dreamed what the exact wording of the Holy Doctrine of Plural Marriages was. He was but a careless and recent convert—a restless, impulsive man, who did things without stopping to think of possible consequences. And he often paid dear for his carelessness. Still he really believed he was making a correct statement about the doctrine of Polygamy. He loved her, too, and his vows were sweet in her ears—when he swore by the dead and the living and by the God of both, that he would have no other wife but her, so long as she lived, and so they were married and went on to the distant City of the Saints, and settled down and built a fair house, and as for two years she had led a rough and homeless life, she was proud and happy, when all being settled to her satisfaction she stood in her new home and with her husband's arms about her rejoiced over its peace and security. "Yes, those had been her very words—peace and security."

As she broke into laughter there, I asked her why she laughed?

She answered that she could not help it; that whenever she recalled that moment of her life, it suggested

the idea of two children, who had first entered a tiger's cage and then inquired of those outside the bars, whether or not the fierce animal was dangerous to visitors, and after a bit she added: "*She* had found the tiger very dangerous indeed!"

Her baby had come to her then and her husband had been devoted to it. Some Mormon women had visited her and reproached her for not urging Plural Marriage upon her husband for the sake of his future glory in Heaven—if for no other reason! Would she be content to have him a mere serving angel—as he would be if he had but one wife! The more wives he trailed after him in Heaven, the higher his place and powers. One gentle creature used always to plead for some woman's chance of immortality, telling her that females were without souls of their own and could only enter Heaven through their relationship to man, and in keeping her husband thus selfishly to herself she might be cruelly depriving some sister woman of life hereafter.

She had always been kind and friendly with them, but argued as little as possible—yet in a short time complaints were made about her. Her husband was advised by one of the Saints that she should be disciplined; they declared she was a firebrand! "What had she done?" "Why she had created dissatisfaction among the women, and what was she anyway, that she should live in a manner different from other Mormon wives?"

Hoping to make things easier for her husband, she had gone with him on Sunday to the Tabernacle, and

had sat with other helpless women and had been directly addressed in language of almost incredible vulgarity and brutality. The shameful epithets being applied not only by the elders but by the apostles, while the worst offender of them all was the very Prophet himself. Ah, she cried, all the world has shrunk from his habit of referring to the women as cattle—cows, heifers and calves! but they were terms of decency, even of polished refinement compared to those Prophet Brigham Young used, when he made women the butt of his brutal buffoonery, and clumsy satire, before laying upon them his savage commands! And she had sat with burning face and downcast eyes, and seeing the trembling of her husband's clenched hands, had been comforted—because she knew he was shaken with anger at the insult put upon her womanhood. More and more often certain of the elders of the church had sought him out after the fourth year had passed in Salt Lake City. They came to his house after business hours—they commented upon his success—they estimated his probable house expenses, and she had laughed at them as busybodies when they were gone, and could not understand John Purser's growing agony of mind.

Then one day he had come to her very white-faced, and told her he had been deceived about the "Holy Doctrine," and had now been studying it and from its frothy foolishness of expression—its river of repetitions, two cruel facts had emerged—Polygamy was a binding law of the Church, and it was expressly stated that "all who had this law revealed to them,

must obey the same! That if one failed to abide by the Covenant—then was he damned!" Also of the woman, whose husband had taught her the law of the priesthood as pertaining to these things (Plural and Celestial Marriages) it was plainly stated: "She *shall* believe, and she shall *administer unto him,* or she shall be *destroyed!*"

That last was a word of awful import to any Mormon—man or woman—and for the first time she had been frightened—a little later and the blow her husband had been dreading, fell! There had been a visit from two Elders of high standing, who came to say great honour had come upon him, inasmuch as the Prophet Young had received a revelation directly concerning the physical happiness and the spiritual power and glory of John Walter Purser—in short he was to take to wife one Sarah Hyde, and so perform his duty to the Church. And he had pleaded, reasoned, argued—all in vain. When he had spoken of her—his wife—they had coldly informed him that he was living in sin with her—as the Mormon Church recognised no marriage that was not sanctioned by the Prophet. Finally they had withdrawn smiling evilly and saying they would give him a short time in which to make up his mind. A day passed and surprisingly few people entered John Purser's store. On the second day he noticed a curious red mark on his door, and everyone who saw it turned away without entering. The third day not a single human being entered the shop and he understood—the ban of the Church was upon him, in the words of to-day he was boycotted.

In terror he had thought of flight and quietly made some inquiries about railroad fares—when the agent to whom he spoke in strict confidence, and who was his friend, begged him for God's sake not to attempt to leave if he valued either his wife's life or his own.

"You ought to know enough by this time," he said, "of the power and the vindictiveness of this party of men who run the Church. The body of the Mormon people are simple, ignorant and honest, but they have vowed *blind obedience* to the Prophet, and they keep their vows. With the mark against your name, your life is not worth a rushlight anywhere in the territory. Go home—throw yourself on the mercy of your wife and obey the Church—before you disappear as mysteriously as did the Elder who refused to give his fourteen-year-old daughter to be J. D. Lee's ninth wife. What are you compared to an Elder? Yet he is gone and Lee has the daughter! So what chance have you? A Mormon must sacrifice everything to his standing in the Church!"

He had gone home—the husband and wife had agonised through the night—and next day he notified the Prophet that he would be at the Endowment House to accept his new wife at any time he chose to appoint.

The woman talking to me grew white even at the recollection of that awful day when she had prepared her house for the reception of another wife. I cannot repeat the humiliating details—but all that kept her from laying violent hands upon herself, was her child's need of her.

Usually, the first wife has to assist at all the marriages her husband makes—indeed it is the first wife who joins the hands of the contracting parties, and gives the new wife to her husband; but she had been spared that awful ordeal, because the Church denied her marriage. Bravely she prepared the evening meal and met the bride of her own husband at the door of her own little home. The new Mrs. Purser being Mormon born and bred, felt no embarrassment, which was well. Bravely Number One held on to her self-control through that dreadful meal—a self-control nearly destroyed by her little girl's innocent inquiry: "Mama—is that strange lady going to stay with us until to-morrow?" That night she had passed on her knees by the side of her sleeping child.

In the weeks and months of agony, of shame, of humiliation that followed, she looked at her wedding ring and had murmured, "after all I am his wife in the eyes of God! I alone—yes, I am his real wife," and that thought sustained her.

Sarah Purser had many relatives and they often visited her, and thus a new torture came into the life of Annie Purser, for an uncle of the former—a certain powerful elder in the church—cast a favouring eye upon her, and, treating her as an unmarried woman, drove her fairly wild with his attentions and proposals. Then in the midst of it all, her little girl had fallen ill. The father had seemed most anxious, and had shared the night-watching with her, and even in that time of fear, she had felt how sweet it was to have him all her own again for a few precious hours.

But the young Sarah was irked by the sickness and the quiet. She demanded that "her husband take her to a party at her uncle's."

The child seemed worse, the mother pleaded: "Don't leave me John to face this crisis alone!" and he had looked into her terrified eyes and promised to watch with her—and then after a little pouting and a few angry tears from Sarah, she had heard the front door close—heard laughter outside and knew she had been left to keep her vigil alone. So alone, unaided, she held the little racked and plunging form in its convulsive struggles—alone, she straightened the small limbs when they were quiet forever—and as she knelt by the dead child, she knew that something else had died that night and that was the old love for her husband!

A certain pitying kindness was all that she felt for him now; and even before the body of their child had been carried to the grave John Purser had felt the change in her and had resented it passionately, for, she said, smiling sadly: "Men are made that way, you know! They are very selfish and exacting!"

A weary soul-deadening year had passed. Sarah was urging her husband to take as a third wife her cousin—she wanted her for company she said, and he could well afford to support another wife, and almost daily she tried to get him to put away the first.

And then it was he was stricken down with a fever, and the first wife it was who nursed and watched and waited, and hung upon the doctor's words—and blessed God that she had not been driven from the

house! In his delirium he was nearly always back in the past—the blessed, safe, free past! Sometimes in a terrified whisper he betrayed secrets of the church that made her hair almost move upon her brow; and when he half recognised her, he would whisper: "Fly! fly!" Once he told her where to find a little money, and made her sew it into her corset; and then the end had come—he died and was buried; and smiling and smug the detested elder had offered to "seal" her for a "spiritual wife." She had rejected his proposal. Then he had offered to marry both the widows, by proxy. Her horror had got the better of her discretion—she had spoken plainly. All her hatred—her shame—her loathing—and—and—(the woman shook as she added) he had spoken then so plainly and made a threat so awful, she had nearly died of terror as she listened. The Prophet sanctioned his marriage to her and since she refused to obey the law—she should be destroyed!

As he left her, he had looked back to say: "I reckon you'll be at the Endowment House about next Thursday. The mark goes against your name to-day!"

And she had fled that very night and had by the mercy of a Gentile, for whom she had done some sewing, been allowed to enter the cars as one of her travelling party. The money her husband had hidden away for her had not lasted long. She had only got this far toward the East. She kept in quiet places—she worked hard to support herself and save a little to carry her further toward safety. In another month

she would have enough to leave this place, and once in the East—she stretched out her arms wide: "God!" she exclaimed; "God!" and drew a long, long breath!

I sat silent for a moment, swallowing down the lump in my throat, then I asked: "Have you ever been disturbed at all—since you fled?"

"Have I?" she cried. "Twice I have been forced to leave a place, just as I stood! Once I was declared to be a mad woman, escaped from an insane asylum! I jumped from a second-story window that time! But here I've been undisturbed and almost at peace—until to-day!"

She rose quickly and lifting the shade, peered anxiously into the darkness. "Those men—those strangers! Why should strangers find their way to that out of the way place? And if one of them was disguised why that was proof positive! Then she had felt ever since she rose yesterday that calamity was hanging over her!"

I laughed and said: "I am your calamity—I was hanging over you!"

She came back from the window and looked down on me as I lay in the cushions. She stroked my arm lightly, she spoke gently, almost tenderly: "An Eastern woman—a woman whose husband is her own—a woman from the place of safety? No, you are no calamity!" A queer faraway look came into her eyes, and she half whispered: "You are my witness!"

She left me—I went to the car door with her. I did not like to see her go; I felt a sudden sinking of

the heart. We stood on the platform, she looked up into the steady brilliancy of the stars.

"How calm and sure they are," she said. "Up there one would be out of the shadow of the Temple as much as in the East," and after a silent grasp of the hand and a steady look in the eye, she left me—erect and quick-moving at the side of the porter who loomed up above her.

I was but two days further on my way, when I saw in a local paper:

"Tragic accident at S——," and read how some men—strangers—"who had been noticed by several people the day before, had wandered into a quiet street in the outskirts of the town and had suddenly begun to quarrel among themselves—had drawn revolvers and fired a perfect fusillade. They must have been very much intoxicated, for not one of them was hurt—but the sad part of it was, a stray shot had passed through a window and instantly killed a most estimable woman—a Mrs. Wilton."

I dropped the paper—I turned sick and faint. After a bit I looked at it again: "The strangers had disappeared during the confusion—an easy matter as the men-folk were all away in the mines. They had got out of town on a freight train and dropped off before the train reached the next station. While it was called an accident, many thought a crime had been committed." So it was with tear-drenched eyes I entered Salt Lake.

That fair city of the Mountains—the jewel of

great Utah—all girdled round with the living green of cultivated trees, and veined through and through with swift-running, sparkling water. Fair almost as the Vision City, that inspired and drew on that army of martyrs, who marched—staggered—even crept on hands and knees, through the God-forgotten desert into the fastness of the Mountains, following in agony the path taken in advance (and in perfect comfort) by the Heads of the Church, and when the Prophet and his apostles came out to meet and welcome the starved remnant of that devoted army, they thought their condition so laughable that they turned and rode aside to hide their gales of merriment, and with coarse oaths—swore they were a lot of moulting scarecrows! But the half-crazed scarecrows on their knees saw but the City of their Dreams.

Only the leaders practised polygamy then. The body of the people were religious enthusiasts, who knew nothing yet of the " Holy Doctrine," and those who lived had helped to build this goodly City of the Saints.

At the hotel, I stood in my parlour window and looked over at the great turtle-like Tabernacle, where women had sat under public insult Sunday after Sunday. I looked at the Temple, and to myself, I said: " Your mortar has been mixed with tears—you stand upon a foundation of broken hearts—you are covered and roofed over with the degradation of women; but your towers and spires will lift their imprecations into the very face of Heaven! " And as the tears slipped down my cheeks, I seemed to hear the gentle, fright-

ened voice of Mrs. Wilton, saying: "I am standing in the shadow of the Temple and I shall never be safe until I am in my grave!"

She is safe now, but the Temple casts a very black shadow still!

IX

BRILLIANT FAILURES

HAVE you ever been present as a witness of a brilliant failure? What a bitter-sweet experience it is; at one moment you feel all the pride of a discoverer, at another you are overwhelmed with mortification that the city's best are not crowding to do honour to this artist's work; then you are contemptuous of the critic's chill words of praise, and wonder bitterly if this desolation is caused by the need of a ubiquitous press-agent with a tropical imagination.

Marie Seebach was playing in New York and I longed passionately to see her.

"Oh," said my prompter, one morning, "I wouldn't worry my head about her; she's playing to empty benches anyway."

"What has that to do with her work? Germans are true lovers of acting, and in her own land she is honoured and esteemed, therefore she must be a fine actress; and, oh, I do want to see somebody worth honouring!"

But Mr. Prompter was not to be moved to sympathy. "Bad business—bad acting," was his belief, though we both knew where some very indifferent acting was being done to packed houses nightly.

Going home I found an old lady relative of Mr.

Jefferson's (Mrs. Fisher) waiting to see me, and almost the first thing she said was: "Well, I've had a treat! I'm passionately devoted to the play of 'Jane Eyre,' and I've seen every *Jane* in this country. Oh, yes, my dear, I saw you even in your single performance for the Custer Monument, and the sooner you add the play to your repertoire the better, for you and the public. It's odd what different points actresses will seize upon in the same play to make prominent. Now there's your exit in the first act, that silent agony when you were commanded to lay down the book you held clasped to your breast. The stolid, mulish resistance that had stiffened into one anguished gesture of vain appeal—then with drowned eyes and features quivering like a face reflected in troubled water, still speechless, you disappeared—ah, me! it's hard to wet old eyes, my dear, but mine were brimming, and my throat ached chokingly. But there spoke your own passion for books, my child—it tinctured your *Jane* distinctly. Last night I saw Seebach——"

"Yes?" I cried enviously.

"Yes," she went on, "and I thought to find her too old at every point of the play, but believe me, she was quite perfect. Ugly—awkward—bony—frightened, she slunk and dodged about until her outburst came, and then, I swear to you, she frightened me—the furious cat! Her pale eyes glared; she hissed and spat her words at her aunt; she piled accusation upon accusation; reminded her of cold and hunger borne, of bruise and hurt and contemptuous sneer, but all

the suffering of all the years were as nothing to the tortured child, in comparison with the agony of terror she had known, when forced by her cruel aunt to spend the night alone in the great curtained bed, in the big dark room, where her uncle had just died. My dear, never have I seen a terror like to that! She shrank together, she shook like a palsy. Her wild eyes darted nervous glances in all directions. Her voice grew shrill and high and her final cry: 'You left me there in the dead man's bed; in the dark and alone —alone—alone!' pierced my brain like a physical pain; and I saw men bite their lips and dart quick glances over their shoulders, so contagious was that awful fright; and that great acting was witnessed by perhaps three hundred persons! Ah, we are a strange people. We do, most assuredly, appreciate fine art when we see it, but our attention must be attracted to it by the beating of tom-toms; we can't trust a quiet announcement. We are like the young bees, that ignore all gentle persuasion to enter a beautiful and convenient hive, while the dinner-horn and the rattling of tin pans will bring them safely swarming into a section of hollow log or a hole in a tumble-down chimney. The Madam has not beaten the tom-tom, I'm sure."

After that I was still more eager and anxious, for this lady spoke with authority, as she had herself been an actress in the old days of Burton's management; had been a friend of Charlotte Cushman, when the latter had turned from singing to acting and was hampered by her unusual height and her deep voice.

From that period too dated the legend of Cushman's solemn, secret profanity. She was most wofully awkward with her needle it seems, and for one play she had invariably to take the front breadth out of her cotton velvet gown, that it might be trimmed and looped up over a satin petticoat. She stood before the cast-case and saw the detested tragedy announced again for next day's rehearsal, and in her deepest tone remarked: "There's another sore thumb in store for me. D—— that play anyway—(pause)—and the man who wrote it—(pause)—and—and the fool who keeps putting it on the bill every week or two—d—— him too!" and she stalked away like a young grenadier in petticoats.

After acting at matinée, I was spared the Saturday night performance and I went to see Seebach. If the night was dismal—the theatre was a desolation. In the foggy atmosphere the lights burned blue and dim. The overture was late, slow and spiritless. The turning up of the lights however revealed the agreeable fact that the audience made up in quality what was lacking in quantity, and most of the people there bore names that would honour any list of "Among those present were," had the ubiquitous one only been on hand to take them down.

The play was "Adrienne Lecouvreur." The scenery was old and tawdry and finger marked; the furniture shabby; but the costuming was correct and the work of the company was excellent. Undoubtedly Marie Seebach's first appearance was disappointing to an audience. She was one of those women who are

prettier in private life than on the stage. She had a fine head, but her wigs were poor and marred its shape. Her nose was very prominent. She was a blonde—not of the luxuriant and golden type, but of the quiet, unobtrusive, flaxen order. She did not make up very skilfully either, and her gowns of correct design and of rich material were most vilely fitted. Most of them were cut very low and after the early Victoria fashion—clear off the shoulder. I think she must have lost much flesh after their making, for they merely hung upon her thin figure, and slipped and slid and kept her busy clutching at first one shoulder and then the other in a distressful effort to keep her waist from dropping quite below any point sanctioned by the proprieties. It was evidently an old habit, too, for in the middle of her lover's tenderest speech, at the most tense moment of a critical situation, up went the shoulder, clutch went the thin white hand at the slipping waist. It was very trying to the nerves of the lookers-on. Women felt like crying—men felt like swearing, and one who sat on my left, snapped out to his companion: "Oh, why don't she let that thing drop, mother, and do her acting in her petticoat?"

I received proof that night that history repeats itself, even in the matter of absurdities. Most of us recall with what impish glee Miss Rhoda Broughton makes the homeliest man in town roar out to the lovely heroine, in the sudden stoppage of the waltz music: "Oh, call me just plain William!" Elsewhere in a church, crowded to suffocation, it hap-

pened that the thunder of the organ ceased with such amazing suddenness that every person in the sacred edifice heard a fretful voice declare, "Well, we cook ours in butter!" And here in this theatre, between the third and fourth acts, the ancient joke was played again. The overture was very noisy; the victim, being an outsider, did not of course notice the signal to the leader of the flashed footlights, and suddenly, unexpectedly, the music fell away into a silence, broken only by an eager young voice saying: "You call it a tucker, and a ribbon draws it up all nice and close around the——" Oh, scarlet face and startled eyes, what waves of laughter swept up to your burning ears and beat about your box! Not malicious merriment over the mortifying small mishap, but the people hearing of the tucker that a ribbon drew nice and close, had with quick wit fitted it to the too low, too loose corsage of the actress, and laughed comprehendingly and long.

It was surprising how soon this plain, almost insignificant woman actor began to dominate her audience. First you recognised an intellect, clear, calm, strong; then as you became eager, alert, the skill, the polish, the authority of the trained artiste shone forth to your delight. For myself, at that point I was conscious of a firm resolve to study with all my heart and soul the beautiful method of the great German before me. When her lips twisted into so forced a smile, such dog-like pleading filled her eyes, even while she was sweeping her stately curtsey and speaking over her shoulder indifferent high

words, that fascinated by the glimpse of suffering womanhood held in thrall, I wondered only if she were strong enough to hold her own against enemies so crafty. My spirits went up—went down, as she was succeeding or failing; but the method, the school—dear Heaven, what had become of my study of method, manner, school?

She was, I think, the greatest *Adrienne* I ever saw. She was less brilliant. Her love was not of the tigress order; it seemed to be a tender idolatry. She believed the *Count de Saxe* so readily when he explained away her jealousy; indeed she seemed ever piteously eager for an excuse to forgive him.

Her business over the returned bouquet, I shall never forget. She had taken the fatal kiss from its poisoned petals, and with the sorrowful words:

"Thus ends all memory of him and of my love!"

—she slowly turned, dropped the flowers into the grate and stood looking down upon them in a sort of frozen despair. When suddenly a tiny flame quivered up through the leaves and stems—she gave a faint cry, a wave of tenderest love swept across her face. She caught back her sleeve and with bare arm and hand snatched desperately but vainly at the burning token that flamed up fiercely and went black—out. Then stretching her empty hands piteously over the little grey pile of ash, with a heavy sob she fell upon her face. Figuratively speaking I went upon my knees to her—the house was quite wild and bravas filled the air.

In one respect Madam Seebach was intensely original it seemed to me, in that she subtly conveyed the impression that *Adrienne* never quite forgot her lowly station; never forgot the superior birth of those about her; that she was but a favourite toy of the Court, though the idol of the public. The lines in the 4th act, that most *Adriennes* speak satirically, she spoke with great and modest sincerity. When at the hotel of the Princess de Bouillon, *Michonnet* says aside, speaking of *Adrienne,*

"She looks as great a lady as the best of them,"

she herself remarks:

"In truth, I am confused by so much honour—you and these ladies who have deigned to receive me, afford the humble artist the opportunity of studying that exquisite style, that elegance of carriage, which you alone possess."

And really, I think a little study of the scene justifies her reading as the correct one. Even in the great speech from "Phedre," her restraint of manner was wonderful. She trusted to the strength of the recited words alone, leaving others to apply their meaning to the *Princess,* if they chose. Every other *Adrienne* I have ever seen (even Bernhardt's and Modjeska's) makes the insult deliberately intentional, approaching the *Princess* and pointing the finger of scorn at her very brow, at the last line,

"Unblushing wantons, who know not what is shame!"

Of course the latter is the more dramatic, but I had to admire the consistency of the artiste who sacrificed a great point, rather than let her character get out of drawing. So, to the last scene, pathetic, idolatrously loving, failing, failing—fading; she avoided the horrors the scene tempts an actress to. Only she was tortured into a wild cry for "Life! life!" After that, gently, uncomplainingly, she sank away, and in some mysterious manner she seemed to collapse, to shrink bodily, just as her voice weakened and waxed faint, weaker, till at the end it might have been the body of a child that lay in the chair, with ghastly, upturned face.

It had been a beautiful performance. With hearty gratitude I did my share to bring the distinguished woman before the curtain many times; and she seemed much pleased by the warmth of the people, and smiled so brightly, waved her hand so graciously, that we had half a mind and a strong inclination to sit down again and chat a while with her.

In the lobby, the pouring of the rain could be plainly heard, but not a face darkened; everyone in that small crowd was exclaiming aloud: "Delightful!" "Is she not an accomplished creature?" "How glad I am we came!"—could constantly be heard; and recalling the fine performance, as I gave a final glance at that small, yet delighted crowd, I said to myself: "Clara, my dear, you have seen this night a most brilliant failure. It's easy enough to place the brilliancy correctly, but to whom must the failure be charged? To the public—or to the man-

ager?" Suddenly I thought of Mrs. Fisher's speech about the bees and the tom-toms. I laughed rather ruefully, but I accepted her conclusion. Madame Seebach, herself an artiste, had not deigned to beat the tom-tom, hence this brilliant failure.

X

A CRUCIAL MOMENT

TO this day I feel a faint, creepy chill along my spine when I recall the first year of my career as a "star" and that crucial moment when my fate hung in the balance—when Boston's steady hand held the scales and Boston's voice was to decide for or against me. I dry my forehead now when I think of it.

It must be remembered that in the old days of the American stage a star was more absolutely, more utterly dependent upon the favour of the public than she is to-day. With the evolution of the press-agent yet undreamed of, and the "angel" or "backer" almost unknown, the situation was simple as stern. If the public liked you and rolled its dollars blithely into the box-office drawer you were a proud and happy star. If the public was bored by you, no dollars came with which to pay printers' bills, hotel and travelling bills: lo, you were a humiliating failure! All the expensive and complicated machinery that is used to-day to force a success was undreamed of then.

In those days, too, there was a solemn awe which that august name, Boston, inspired in the dramatic breast. To have played a season in any Boston theatre meant an addition of at least five dollars a week to the salary of either man or woman in the

"stock"; while to have played in the old Boston Museum meant a pale, but to the eyes of the faithful a visible halo hovering about the head. New York? Do not mistake me, for then, as now, New York was the beautiful, glittering Mecca toward which every eye turned longingly. For a success in New York one would risk one's life, but for a success in Boston—intellectual, coldly, keenly critical Boston—there were those who would have risked their immortal souls!

And so from my earliest youth had I heard Boston exalted, and by the time I was seventeen years old, I could frighten myself cold and stiff by the simple device of pretending I had to open in Boston that night.

Finally, when the years of hard work had gone by, each leaving me some tiny particles of the golden dust of knowledge, together with a keener observation and a truer appreciation of those above me, the dreadful trial came. The Boston engagement was to cover the last two weeks of my first season as a star. Worn to a shadow—unceasing pain, much travel, hard work and mental anxiety had brought the end of my tether well into view, so far as physical endurance was concerned; and as "Camille" was the play for the first week and "Miss Multon" for the second, an almost unbearable strain was entailed upon me, in that while acting a five-act play I should have also to rehearse every day "Miss Multon's" five acts with a company that had never seen the play.

So it happened that I faced my trial engagement in the worst possible shape, and as I left my dressing-

room before the rise of the curtain, the doctor exclaimed fretfully: "You're playing this engagement on your naked nerves."

And I turned to suggest solemnly, "Undraped nerves, please, doctor; do remember this is Boston, where even people's thoughts are properly clothed." Another moment and I had taken the plunge and was standing with bowed head trying to get back my breath, and dimly realising that this reception was not the courteous, cool greeting I had expected, but was full of hearty warmth that meant—welcome. And it suddenly dawned on me that if I failed to come up to its expectations, this great audience would be—sorry. An immense gratitude filled my heart; every instinct I ever had for acting seemed to spring up, alert and eager. My one desire for the moment was to prove to these people that in the sin-weary soul which *Camille* dragged about in her disease-smitten slow-dying body there still existed the tiny spark divine, and that blown upon by a true love it might kindle into the steady, white flame of self-sacrifice. For a time my fears fell from me—I forgot in what city I was.

In the third act there was a wordless point which in other cities I had tried to make, but if it had succeeded there had been no recognition made in either applause or in criticism. To me, personally, it always seemed that at old man *Duval's* first mention of his daughter, *Camille* chilled with the breath of coming doom; that vaguely, uncertainly, she felt in the crystal purity of that girl's character the Juggernaut before

which she and her late-blooming love were to be cast. So, seated at the table that night, *Camille,* with nervous, never-resting fingers plaiting and unplaiting the cover, listened unmoved to all arguments, until *Duval père* said: "I have a daughter (the busy fingers paused)—young—beautiful—and pure as an angel." At the word "pure" her hands fell. Then, like a timid animal scenting danger, *Camille's* frightened eyes stared straight into vacancy, while all breathless, motionless, she waited her doom to shape itself, take form, as it did in the words: "She loves as you do—but the family of the man she is about to marry has heard of you and——"

The words were crossed by sudden applause, steady, sustained, comprehensive; and joy rose to my very lips. These people understood what I had tried all dumbly to express. Ah, I thought, truly this is Boston!

Then at last, when all was over, we faced each other with wet eyes but smiling lips, and standing beaming, bowing, it seemed to me that through the great roar I was conscious of each concomitant hand-clap, cane-thump or foot-stamp, every breaking out of a soppy little handkerchief or broader flutter of a bigger, dryer one. Then the leader of the orchestra stood boldly up and heartily applauded—a mighty compliment that, and I, who did not know him yet other than that he was a musician of parts, swept him in return the deepest courtesy I could reach short of sitting down flat before him; and in thus pleasing myself I pleased the house, for the leader was no

other than Mr. Napier Lothian, and a mighty man in Boston's musical circles.

Oh, but I was happy! For was not this Boston that smiled upon me! So, believing myself out of the woods of doubt and fear, I felt free to halloo my gratitude, my surprise and joy to all the points of the compass! I never dreamed that eight days later I should face them again in a terror compared to which to-night's would seem composure—on trial again not merely as an actress, but as a woman charged with an error without precedent in theatrical history.

In "Camille" I had been supported by the local company, and their work had been excellent. They were clever, experienced players, and as I had brought with me two young girls to play *Jane* and *Paul* in "Miss Multon," I looked forward to an exceptionally fine performance of it, and worked hard toward that end with a very passion of energy that filled the manager with anxiety lest this thorough training of the company should leave me bankrupt of strength for my own hard part.

The ladies of the cast were the first to know their lines, the first to comprehend the story of the play and to grasp the meaning of its "situations" and to hold them. But with the men I could wear out my throat, my strength and my patience in the clearest possible explanations of delicate and important bits of business, only to find that next day the entire matter had been forgotten; and, worse, the instructed ones were still imperfect in their lines.

Too late for the knowledge to be of service to me, I discovered the cause of this cruel indifference to the fate of the new play.

It was one of the cast who said to another: "Well, I'm blest if you know your few lines yet, and my conscience! how that woman has worked over you!"

"Over me!—better say over the old man. He's going to go all to pieces—you mark now. That part is a terror, and you know how S—— likes to put off study and 'wing' his lines. But he'll come down like a thousand of brick this time."

"Ah, well," returned the other, "who wants to break himself over a new part the last week of the season? And even if a paper gives you a black eye, what of it—before next season opens it'll be forgotten. A new play for the closing week!"

In these brutally frank words I found corroboration of my worst fears, which from the first had gathered about Mr. S——, who was cast for the beautiful, lovable, dignified old *Bélin,* tutor to the two children, even as he had been tutor to their father before them.

Here, then, in Boston—of all places on earth—I was to meet not opposition but inertia!

Few plays contain as difficult a scene as that of *Bélin's* in the second act of "Miss Multon." He alone holds all the threads of this dreadful domestic tangle. Every soul in that family, guilty or innocent, has a hand upon his heartstrings. He owes love and gratitude to all who bear the honourable name of De la Tour. Trying from one to hide his guilty knowl-

edge behind a mask of childlike candour and innocence; addressing *Miss Multon* openly in terms of chill reserve and formality, but secretly with trembling, piteous entreaty; attempting to serve all, he quite naturally comes to grief—but in the coming, what splendid chances for acting, as New York proved by its glad acclaim of Mr. John Parselle as an artist *par excellence* in this same part of *Bélin.*

That in this part an actor has need of all his quickness and certainty of action, to say naught of perfect memory, a single speech delivered by *Sarah Multon,* with its attendant business for *Bélin,* will indicate. The open lines are *Miss Multon's,* those in parentheses *Bélin's* business.

"Monsieur Bélin! (he turns sharply away); Monsieur Bèlin! (he trembles violently, folds his arms and holds position); will you be the one to say, 'Do not receive this woman (he weeps), she is not Sarah Multon—she is Fernande'? (face hidden, throws out left hand in entreaty). Now look at me, Monsieur Bélin—look, I say! (she grasps his hand and he turns very slowly and in utter dread) and learn to understand me better, sir! If you do not aid me to remain here; if you drive me away—I living, you know the result! That marriage is void—that woman is no longer his wife! (with a cry of anguish he extends clasped hands and implores, etc.)"

So in this single speech *Bélin* finds six cues to remember instead of the usual one. Truly one needs to be letter-perfect in such a part.

Well, it had to come, that Monday night, and when I saw the big house and noted the air of suppressed excitement, the tears rushed to my eyes—tears of nerve-worn self-pity.

"Am I ready? Yes," I answered to the inquiring call-boy; and the next moment the curtain was up, and the scene at the doctor's office in London was going on, and it was really going well. Yes, the servant was sputtering and confused; the old bachelor doctor and old maid sister snapped and snarled deliciously in a laboriously vain effort to hide their mutual affection; the audience laughed heartily (oh, blessed sound!); then the "charity children" tumbled on, and then, grey-haired, grey-cloaked, bonneted and gloved, a sort of ashen, sad woman, *Miss Multon* was softly crossing the stage, through that perfect stillness that brings a thrill of triumph to the actress whose art has so far hidden her identity that her own personality is obscured by that of the character she is representing.

With my first words, "What toys?" came recognition and a storm of applause that rocked me back and forth as a tempest might have done. But secret fear was racking me; self-control was going. My face worked painfully, tears rose to my eyes, when—I almost feel it still—the circling warmth and comfort of the sturdy little arm that slipped strongly about my swaying body; I almost hear again the friendly voice whispering quickly: "Don't—don't break, dear; think of the part you play!" Clever old actress, how well she knew what

note to sound: "Think of the part!" One moment I clung to her, the next I had slipped safely back into the character of the sorrow-numbed, ashen-grey *Miss Multon*. The first curtain fell upon genuine success. There had been errors, several of them; but they had been of so slight a nature that the audience had not detected them.

As I hurried to my room, I caught sight of a man in a distant entrance tramping wildly up and down with a part in his hand—which part he was studying with might and main. It was *Bélin*. I spoke no word, but my heart fell swift and heavy as a plummet.

The second act was on, and as I came to my place of waiting for my cue, I distinctly heard the children prompting. Oh, I groaned, he cannot already have come to grief! I hurried to an opening and looked on the stage. That most tender and moving scene where the children (*Jane* and *Paul*) beg their tutor to drop lessons for a few moments, in order to tell them of their dear, dead mother, whom they love and can still faintly remember, was being turned into ridicule by the honest but unskilled efforts of the children to prompt the actor in his lines. They knew naught of the trick of looking in an opposite direction while softly passing the missing word to the person in trouble; they simply blurted out the correct line, looking squarely at him and greatly amusing the audience by their superior knowledge—and that was the beginning of the end.

Never, no, never, in my most overworked days in the West, had I taken part in a performance like

this. Most important situations were ignored because Mr. S—— dared not leave the prompt-side of the stage and get beyond the prompter's voice. Others grew confused by that and in turn forgot their lines. Someone missed a cue and did not go on until after an agonising wait.

Then came the big scene between *Bélin* and *Miss Multon*. It was a scene for gods and men alike to wonder over. All the delicate side-play was wiped out of existence. Acting—there was none. The whole thing degenerated into a wild catch-as-catch-can struggle for the bare lines. This was no polished gentleman and scholarly old bookworm, but a dishevelled, flustered, sputtering old man, who had utterly lost his bearings, and who cast into the French play now and again a few American colloquialisms, so that the people roared with laughter. Still I grimly fought on, trying to maintain the woman's personal dignity and tragic intensity, until this happened: He should have turned his back upon me, as we had so often rehearsed, but instead he stood gazing toward me. Between my teeth I said to him: "Turn away—turn away, please." Then I resumed: "Monsieur Bélin, will you be the one to say (stay where you are) 'Do not receive this woman: she is not Sarah Multon—she is Fernande'? (For God's sake, sir, turn away!)" Then with intense determination I said: "Now look at me, Monsieur Bélin, and understand me better!"

It was too much! My aside instructions had been overheard; and to cap all he had turned and like a

great boy, stammered: "Y-y-yes, ma'am." Swift laughter ran over the house, and I realised that when the wave of ridicule includes the heroine the play is dead.

I was dazed—chilled! Some way I reached the end, and the curtain fell on utter disaster. One or two persons patted me on the shoulder and said: "What a shame!" Then it all rushed over me in one great wave! The outrage upon the author, the insult to the public and my own undeserved downfall. Turning about I said to the prompter: "Dismiss those people, please."

Everyone stood stock still and stared unbelievingly at me.

I repeated sharply, "Dismiss that audience! If you do not care to assume the responsibility send for the manager! When this company knows its lines we will present the play again—not before!" and bursting into dry, tearless sobs and gasps of excitement I rushed toward my dressing-room.

Shall I ever forget the scene that followed? Above the playing of the overture rose a very Babel. My own name came to me in tones of entreaty, of warning, of almost childish pleading. The beloved little woman who played Miss Osborne patted my hands and said: "My dear, my dear! they have driven you quite out of your head, but—but you can't dismiss the audience!"

I lifted her plump, small hand to my lips and whispered: "I must—the people do not know their lines."

"Dree your ain weird!" she said curtly, and fell away from me.

The working forces of the theatre gathered, a shirt-sleeved group, about me, as I moved toward my room, expressing a sympathy with me and a red-hot willingness to wipe up the stage with the recalcitrant actors in the morning; advising me to go for them through the papers, but assuring me as one man that Boston "was queer an' wouldn't stand no turnin' out of lights on 'em."

Then suddenly through the crowd broke dear old "Dan" Maguinnes. During my successful first week Dan had laughingly boasted of his friendship, saying of me: "I knew her in Halifax, where she helped nurse my sick sister, and when she was Nobody of Nowhere; and just three weeks later she was the biggest sort of Somebody of a New York Theatre."

Dan was a good and a very careful actor, and I hoped, as he rushed toward me, that he at least understood and had come to approve my action. Alas, his anger was hot. He began to bluster. He admitted that the eccentricities of *Bélin* had played havoc with the play, but I must go on, or—or he was done with me.

The rumour of trouble had reached the music-room, and Mr. Lothian, the leader, came like a whirling dervish upon the scene. I had been very proud of his warm approval of my work the week before.

Besides being a brilliant musician he was a witty,

jolly, big-hearted man whom I liked amazingly, and though he used rather rough arguments against me then I was convinced that he believed he was acting for my own good. Again I wearily repeated: "When these people know their lines I will offer the play—not before!"

A violent oath broke from him: "Then you'll never present the play in this city! Dismiss that audience and you will never be allowed on a local stage again. I know Boston better than I know my oldest scores, and it never forgives! But go your own way and be hanged to you!" As he rushed from me I heard him say to Maguinnes: "With all her gifts she's dead and done for now!"

Then Mr. Orlando Tompkins (the manager) approached with Mr. S—— at his side, bowing profusely and talking rapidly.

I reached my room at last, and after the immemorial habit of the outnumbered, placed my back to the wall and with the regularity of a minute-gun fired at all comers my one dogged, set speech, "When these people know their lines I will offer the play—not before!"

In that excited crowd Mr. Tompkins was a really impressive figure, and though his disquiet, perplexity, and worry deepened into most obvious anger at times, he maintained his dignity throughout and never used a rough or churlish word. Swiftly I described what had occurred and my following resolve.

The manager looked hard at Mr. S——, who shuffled, rubbed hands and finally acknowledged that

"The—er—action—er—had been a trifle ragged, and perhaps had dragged a little, but—er——"

I interrupted: "The play has been broken into pieces—spat upon, and cast down for the amusement of the groundlings out there!"

But Mr. Tompkins said soothingly: "Well, you have done your best; and as the second overture is on, we will withdraw while you change your dress and get on with the next act. Perhaps it will redeem this disaster."

I shook my head: "We are not living in the age of miracles. Sir, this play is dead. Only when the people know their lines will I attempt to offer it again!"

His face flushed, but his manner remained calm. "Miss Morris, what possesses you?" he asked. "Your action is incredible; it has no precedent in the history of the stage. No audience was ever dismissed before for such a reason. You have no rule to sustain you!"

"You may be right," I answered; "but I am acting on principle. Honest dealing with the public has been my religion. This audience paid its money to see the play that delighted New York for months. That was what we promised it. Well, is this the New York play? You know it is not. No, I will not further insult the intelligence of these people by offering them three more acts of hopeless imbecility!"

Mr. Tompkins, speaking more sharply than before, asked: "Do you know what this action will cost you, Miss Morris?"

My lips quivered a little as I replied: "Do you mean my engagement? Well, that must rest with you, sir."

"I mean that Boston will have nothing more to do with you."

Nervously, excitedly, I laughed: "Then some other city must provide my beans—and I'll cut out the brown bread, since Boston alone can produce it."

"Believe me," he continued, "you will not find this a jesting matter. Only when Boston has rejected you will you begin to find how far her power reaches; how many cities are influenced by her judgment; how her disfavour will go far toward ruining a young star."

At that moment I caught sight, in the crowd outside the open door, of my own agent. He was very pale, and as his eyes met mine he shook his head and made a warning gesture. That almost broke me down, but I swallowed the lump in my throat and started up the minute-gun again: "When your people know their lines I will offer the play again—not before!"

The overture had ended—an ominous stamping of feet and shrill whistling followed. Mr. Tompkins turned to Mr. S——, and said: "She is immovable—dismiss the audience."

With almost a groan of relief, I reached up an arm for my big cloak, when I caught from Mr. S——'s low-toned answer two most illuminating words: "Her sickness?"

Then my temper broke. With a cry of wrath I

sprang at the man and caught him by the wrist. "Dare!" I gasped. "You dare to go before the curtain and charge this fiasco to sickness of mine, and at your very first word I will appear at the opposite side and tell the people the whole truth. Now go!—but I shall listen to every word, mind you! You have made of me a thing of ridicule tonight, but you shall not use me for a scapegoat besides!"

He went down to the right of the stage, and like a wild thing I flew down to the left. The gentleman appeared before the curtain—silence fell. He coughed and glanced anxiously across to where I stood—bowed—regretted appearing as an apologist—er—er, but owing to (faint mumble, then the clearer words) being too much overworked—(the curtain trembled, he glanced apprehensively again where I was, and saw a long, nervous hand drawing it back and a foot already extended for the step forward, gave a sort of gurgle of dismay and continued)—and—er—in truth the—er—company have not had sufficient time for preparation, and Miss Morris (a wild glance at me), feeling the play suffers by such representation, thinks—er—best to dismiss the audience and——" And so went on explaining about the return of money or exchange of tickets, etc., and finally stammered his way off.

For a moment the people sat quite still—then a lady in a box drew a long breath and said to her escort: "Well, I think she's a brave woman!" The audience rose and slowly went out.

My husband met me with the big cloak. "Don't wait to dress," he said, "you are ghastly! Get home as quickly as you can. The maid will attend to everything."

As I passed there was no longer a crowd about me—all held aloof. Two persons near the door to whom I said "Good-night" seemed not to hear me. A woman crowded past me with quite unnecessary rudeness, and I realised with a pang that so far as theatrical Boston was concerned I was a fallen idol. Now, what would critical Boston do to me, I wondered dully. My husband and my agent went out to visit popular resorts and the newspaper offices, to find out which way the wind blew in this teapot tempest.

I had a woman friend with me that week, and as we sat at our little supper-table and I merely crumbled bread by the side of my plate, she begged me to go to my room and to bed—so I withdrew. But how could I go to bed when I could not say my prayers; and how could I say my prayers when every time I closed my eyes, angry, resentful faces crowded before me, and instead of repeating the comforting words beginning, "Our Father——" with dismay I heard my own voice mechanically muttering again and again, "I thought I was right!—I thought I was right!"?

Dejectedly I gave up the effort and softly paced back and forth, until I heard my agent come in and speak to my friend. As I entered he was saying that a cabal was forming to give me a rough greeting at

my next appearance, as punishment for coming from New York to insult Boston's favourite actors.

"Hisses!" I sat down suddenly and went red with shame at the mere thought of being hissed. At last I said: "Well, what is to be will be! I'm glad you warned me."

Then he told me the play was called for rehearsal next morning—dead letter perfect—without the slightest aid from the prompter. The papers would announce the performance for to-morrow night, and —and, well, a couple of reporters had suggested in a friendly way, that it would be just as well for me to be taken sick late in the afternoon, and so spare myself an unpleasant experience.

"What!" I cried; "back down—run away? I'll act that part if I have to lean on the arm of a policeman!"

My husband then came in. He had visited several newspaper offices, and had found them all greatly interested, all courteous, if a trifle reserved. One critic had said: "She has done to-night what should have been done earlier in the season. She has given these people a much-needed lesson, all of which I shall say in to-morrow's paper."

Like a bullet from a revolver, I shot into my own room, "Oh!" I cried, as I threw off my *robe de chambre,* and "Oh!" again at the thought that one person had a good word for me, even though he misunderstood the motive of my action. And such is the power of a kind word that I clasped my hands, and kneeling again with a heart that seemed to soar up-

ward like a bird, whispered the blessed, comforting "Our Father," and not one frowning face distracted my attention.

Tuesday, more like a ghost than a woman, I agonised silently till evening; then went to the theatre. The house filled slowly. While dressing I heard the piteous tale of the lady who desired to be released from her part because she would have to share the hissing meant for me, and it would surely kill her.

"Well," I said, "I don't believe there's an audience in America that could be driven into hissing a woman." Brave words; but oh, what a sick fear lay deep in my heart!

Another who was sure of the hissing was Mr. Lothian, whose kind heart prompted him to make an effort to save me, as he said to my manager: "Don't let her go on. Say she's sick—Lord knows she looks it. Say she's broken her leg or—or swallowed a toothbrush; anything!—but don't let her go on the stage."

As I came to take my place for the first act, one single person answered my "Good-evening," she who played *Miss Osborne*. I had been told that many of last night's people were here again, and I saw that the same parties occupied the stage-boxes. I would not like to live through many moments like that last one preceding my entrance, when I was bracing myself for a calm acceptance of the worst.

I entered, and once more faced critical Boston. With clenched hands I stood silently in the doorway,

my nails cut through the tips of my gloves, and then short, sharp, rather scattering, came a round of applause. I saw Mr. Lothian turn in his chair and cast an amazed glance at the house. There had been no kindness, no warmth in that greeting; it was like a dash of water in the face—never yet have I misread my audience. I understood it then. "You are on trial," it said; "but Boston is not to be rushed. You shall have justice—never fear."

It was all so different from last night—from that almost affectionate welcome—that I could have cried like a great baby; but my head went up with a jerk, in grave acceptance of their terms. My future hung upon Boston's verdict—let the trial go on!

The first act thawed them a bit. The second—dear God, were ever mouth and throat parched like that before—was ever body shaken by such quivering nerves? Oh, I thought, will Boston misunderstand me, too, and think I have insulted where I meant only to honour her? With wet temples I listened. The scene with the children was over, and the lines had been correctly given. My card was then handed to *Bélin*—the crucial moment had arrived!

Yes, truly, for I was on the stage, silently facing my last night's foe who had worked me such fell disaster. The stillness of the house was intense. Our scene, starting with the ordinary conventionalities of introduction by letter, led rapidly to horror-stricken recognition of the supposed dead *Fernande* in the living *Sarah Multon,* whose frantic story of the treachery practised against her, of the fatalities,

errors, and of the anguish borne, wrung unwilling sympathy from the weak old man, as incapable of resisting her entreaties as he was of ignoring her mad threats.

But this was another being, this bewildered, shocked old gentleman, who neither shuffled nor stammered malapropos remarks, nor grew untidy and dishevelled. I was free then—free! I need no longer watch lest he went to the wrong side and threw out someone else by doing so. Everyone knew what to say, and said it. *Mathilde* walked lightly, smilingly, on the edge of the crater; *De la Tour* was eloquent; the children were joyous, mischievous, natural; the servant was prompt to the instant. At last I could fling the weight of the whole play from off my overburdened shoulders. I had but one part to play now —*Sarah Multon*—and I played it to the last ounce of my strength, to the last fibre of nerve—played it as if a soul were the stake, not the favour of a city—"whirling like a lightning-charged grey tempest through the act," as one critic worded it the next morning. The curtain fell. The thud of its striking was followed by a burst of applause, long and loud.

"Clear for Miss Morris's call," shouted the prompter. "Clear quick!" Everyone ran helter-skelter to leave the stage bare.

"No! no!" I cried. "Hold that curtain—hold it, I say! Call the ladies and gentlemen of the act! Oh, do be quick! You? Why, of course you, *Bélin*—*Mathilde*—the children—*Maurice!* Where on earth is the maid? Hurry—that call will be dead!"

I had them at last—*Bélin* on my left, *Mathilde* on my right, and the others stretched out on each side. I signalled—the curtain began to rise—the applause began to strengthen slightly. But when the curtain was about knee high, and all that long line of skirts and trouser legs was seen, with characteristic swiftness they in front understood this public acknowledgment of good work done, and one mighty roar of applause greeted us, such as made the stage tremble beneath our feet. The curtain fell only to rise again. This time Mr. S——, much moved, tried to push me forward from the line. I caught his hand and led him instead a step forward with me. Musicians, actors, everything that wore hands beat them frantically in the joy of this amity.

Still the curtain might not rest—so at last I went out alone. Grave and anxious and unsmiling, I stood and swept the house with eager eyes, tier by tier. Then suddenly I threw out my extended, questioning hands, palms uppermost, and in answer the house rose to me.

My appeal was granted—I was forgiven—reinstated—Boston's clear voice had pronounced the verdict.

After that the play made a triumphal progress from act to act, up to the last heartbreaking line. Then once more, when all was over, we faced each other with wet eyes but smiling lips—while the joy of that great greeting shook me to the very heart. Boston had accepted me indeed!

XI

RACHEL

" They have made them a molten calf and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto."

RACHEL—is there any name in the world more fascinating, more mysterious, more magical! There seems to be a triumphant ring even in its quietest pronunciation. How eagerly we devour every printed word we can find about that small, frail, pale woman, with inky hair and eyes; that mighty daughter of Israel, who brought the Christian world to her feet, and kept it there for eighteen years. Such genius—such amazing power of expressing her own conceptions —such dignity—such grace, were hers! Oh, to have seen her; to have felt the terror with which she was wont to chill her hearers! That has been my cry ever since I first read in early girlhood of the famous woman whose childhood days were spent in such bitter poverty; whose dwarfed ugliness won her the name of " The half-starved Monkey," as she gathered up the *sous* her elder sister sang for in the cheap *cafés*. " Oh, how dreadful! " I thought, not understanding then that there was no humiliation in the act to the small Jewess, only a joyous satisfaction in seeing the copper coins coming her way. But it was only when the gifted girl had won her first great triumph

that I began to understand and, I must confess it, to hate the Félix family, whose cupidity was such that I believed they would not have hesitated to draw the lifeblood from those precious veins, if they could have stamped it into the coin of the realm.

The young are always severe; I was not looking for mitigating circumstances then; I did not pause to think how bewildering, how intoxicating must have been the effect of the sudden transition from unspeakable poverty; from the society of the low, the ignorant, the vulgar, to that of the educated, the highbred, the aristocratic. I made no allowance for the rapacious greed, the sordid littleness that had been their inheritance from an itinerant peddler ancestry; but seeing the wonderful calmness and dignity with which the one supremely gifted member of the family assumed the rôle of gentlewoman, expected some little self-control, some slight semblance of honour or gratitude from the rest of "that awful Félix crowd," as they came to be called in Paris, and tears of shamed sympathy filled my eyes at that point when the Committee of Management, recognising the hit the young actress had made, sent for her, recalled her contract for four thousand francs salary and gave her instead a new one, calling for eight thousand. A piece of generosity that aroused such a devil of cupidity in Abraham Félix's mind, that straightway he made a study of "Le Code Civil," and finding to his joy that the contract of a minor could be broken, went with gleaming eyes, working mouth and curved fingers to demand of the management terms so amazing, so

outrageous, that in two days the whole city was crying " Extortion ! " and " Shame ! " and thereafter referred to him as " Papa Félix, the Jew," and young Rachel going to her famous and devoted teacher Sanson, for instruction in a new part, was met with a passionate appeal for her to deny the truth of the abominable report that she had ungratefully and dishonourably broken her signed contract with the Committee of Management of the great theatre he so honoured. Then when she briefly remarked " she was a minor and the ' Code Civil ' did not hold such to their contracts," he burst into a very frenzy of shame and rage, and dashing a statuette of his pupil to the floor, declared:

" Your talent will be shattered and annihilated like that image ! " He told her he " taught declamation, not chicanery ! " and that as " he wasn't in the habit of associating with those who sought the measure of their honour and delicacy within the limits of the ' Code Civil,' " finally drove her from his presence.

For her then the shame and humiliation of it all, and though she clothed and fed the whole family; though her younger sisters and her brother were being educated at her expense—she being, by way of educating herself meantime, studying grammar and history in particular—all that tender and loving father allowed his daughter for her own use was three hundred francs a month; sixty dollars for her theatrical costumes, her private wardrobe and her pocket money, a sum utterly inadequate to her requirements. So it is no wonder she hailed with joy her majority. When

after a frightful struggle she broke away from her father's thrall, she gave to the family all their apartments contained, a pension to her father of twelve thousand francs, to her mother for her own private use—oh, wise daughter!—four thousand francs, and exerted herself to secure good positions at high salaries for all those sisters and that one brother; while she paid the debts of one at least of the girls many times. And so that family rapacity that began with that first humiliating extortion by papa, went on to that hideously cruel dash to America, the result of brother Raphael's chimerical illusions, to end at last when the coffin of the world-honoured woman had barely settled in the grave, in a public sale of her belongings.

"She had been exploited for their benefit to the last gasp," says Madame de B., in her "Memoirs of Rachel," "And now it occurred to the Children of Israel, that something more might be made of her remains."

"Had the family been forced by poverty to such an act," said an old French gentleman to me, "it would have been a very painful exhibition, but when every member was amply provided for, the sale, advertised like an American circus, was gross and disrespectful beyond belief. Nothing was held sacred—nothing! Her most intimate belongings, even her very body linen, was exposed to the inquisitive fingers and inquiring gaze of the curious and the greedy."

Tears filled the old gentleman's eyes as he spoke of this last effort to turn public enthusiasm into bright

franc pieces. "Now and then through the crowd," he continued, "I caught a glimpse of one of the Félix family, watching eagerly how the auctioneer was acquitting himself; or hovering near some group of possible buyers, ready to throw in a convincing word as to the genuineness of a jewel or the value of some *bibelot*. For a sign of feeling, for a flush of shame over this needless desecration one had to turn to poor old Rose, the dressing maid, who had seen her mistress rise to her dizziest height, and had done her loving best to retard that mistress's swift descent to the tomb. Twenty years of service had she given to the woman who, capricious, exacting, often violent to others, was to her trusting, affectionate and grateful. And sitting in her skimpy mourning gown and black cap by the side of the bed piled with a small fortune in laced underwear, she lifted tired, indignant old eyes to his face, and said in trembling tones: 'Oh, Monsieur le docteur, it is an infamy, this thing you see here! All could have been sold privately, that should have been sold at all. But these—these intimate garments—these stockings—these chemises—these slippers—oh!' she rocked herself back and forth and stroked tenderly the snowy garments piled upon the bed at her side. 'If only I could afford to buy and keep them together—they breathe of her presence to me, Monsieur! They should have been treasured sacredly by her family, but this Félix crowd are vultures Monsieur!' And just then a woman reached out her hand to pull a lace-covered petticoat towards her, when ancient Rose leaned forward and silently

fixed upon her so fierce and menacing a look, that with a little gasp of fright, the stranger withdrew her hand and hurried away. Ah!" he concluded, "all I could think of was some faithful, helpless, old spaniel bravely displaying its toothless jaws in a loving defence of a dead owner—poor old Rose!"

Recalling how the petty hatred of Abraham Félix for Sanson was allowed to accompany the great dead, even to the grave, he said to me: "Thanks to a twenty-year-old spite, Rachel—the greatest actress France ever produced, the last defender of the classic drama, the stay and support of tragedy—went to her grave without one voice from the Comédie Francaise being raised in her praise or honour; without one word to testify to the greatness of the loss the theatre had sustained. Streams of eloquence flowed about the small coffin, but the speakers were famous writers, not actors. Everyone waited for the words of Sanson —the devoted teacher, who had been second only to Jules Janin in the service he had rendered Rachel in her days of struggle; waited in vain for him to come forward as the representative of the theatre of her love, but neither he nor another spoke one word of affection or farewell in the name of the Comédie Francaise. Paris stood aghast, until Monsieur Empis, the manager, made public the letter of Félix senior, when it approved the action of the *sociétaires* in resenting the insult he put upon a comrade loved and esteemed by all, whose merit and priority of standing in the company gave him the right to represent them on so brave and important an occasion.

"So just as in that faraway first breach of contract by Félix *père* it was Rachel who suffered the humiliation; so alas, it was Rachel whose funeral honours were shorn of their chief ornament through *père* Félix's breach of the common decencies of behaviour!" And my old friend would walk excitedly about shaking his ten widely spread fingers in the air, for he was still very French in manner for all his American citizenship.

All my days I have had this undying hunger for information about Rachel. She has all the fascination for me that the Arabian Nights has had for the most of us. Never have I met at home or abroad an old playgoer without instantly asking: "Have you ever seen Rachel?" If the answer is "Yes," then that man or that woman is marked for "the third degree." Such examining—such cross-examining as the unfortunate is subjected to. One of my most precious finds was the elder Dr. Seguin (father of the late E. C. Seguin), who filled my heart with satisfaction by remarking that Rachel shone like a star of brilliant, intellectual and spiritual life against the black cloud of her ever sordid family. He owned pictures that were so rare, so interesting, that I'm afraid that commandment that says "Thou shalt not covet," got cracked a bit. "Thou shalt not steal," was all right though, because the doctor kept the pictures under double locks.

Then my next splendid find was another doctor, a younger man in a Southern city. Actually he had travelled with my enchantress through part of that

fatal American trip. One day—it had been raining—while I was re-reading the "Memoirs" and sitting after the shower, thinking of the wonderful power of the great French woman, and trying to understand where her effects came from, I noticed a rain-drop resting on a leaf, that, clear, trembling, held all the wide blue sky and piled white clouds in its tiny compass, and suddenly I cried: "She, Rachel, must have been like that! With her frail woman's breast encompassing the aspirations, sorrows, sins, and passions of Humanity!" That of course was only one of those instinctive conclusions that make women so amusing to more logical men, but see what good supporting evidence it found in Paris but four months later.

Mademoiselle Dinah Félix was acting still, and my efforts to find in what play she was likely to appear amused my French acquaintances greatly, until I explained my eager desire to approach even so distantly the great Rachel, when one said to me: "You will gain more through a meeting with a certain old neighbour, and I think a relative of the Félix family, than from watching Mademoiselle Dinah, who is a very indifferent actress, and was never the intimate of Rachel, as were Sarah and Rebecca."

So, trembling with excitement, I was given an opportunity to transact a little business with the old Hebrew woman and quite incidentally to speak the magic name—Rachel. She was lowly, poor, mercenary, but she had a splendid pride in her great sister in Israel. A sharp tongue, a memory that held a fact as tenaciously as her hand held a coin, and an immeasur-

able contempt for the Félix crowd—whom she likened to leeches.

"Oh!" she cried, with her hooped gold earrings a-tremble and almost a moisture in her yellow-flecked old eyes, "her voice, her marvellous voice! It ran along your nerves like that! (with a trembling of her fingers) So deep, so grave, so solemn—like the music in a cathedral!"

"And that hoarseness, that weakness so often spoken of," I asked, "was that genuine or was it—well, acting?"

The old woman looked at me with a sly, half-closed eye, as she answered: "Of course she may have been exhausted sometimes to the point of hoarseness and of voice failure, but somehow when a great scene arrived the great voice returned to her in time and electrified the audience. Such enunciation—Madame you cannot have heard, no syllable was ever lost. Sit where you would, each word perfect—polished, full of meaning, came safely, musically to your ear. When she raged—she was fine! fine! But those nights when she had the devil in her,—B-r-r-r! when she had it in for some one—comprenez-vous? That is the American way to say it, eh? *la haine*—she was Rachel plus Félix—and Félix plus the Devil! And she make the hair to creep on the head and the flesh of the goose to come upon the arms! B-r-r-r!"

Suddenly she threw back her head, showing a half string of gold beads, tied tight about her yellow throat, and laughed a contemptuous and knowing laugh. "How often, Madame, have you read of the

wonderful eyes of the great Rachel—many times, eh? How often have you read of them as flashing, blazing, glistening, lustrous? Many times again, eh? Well each time that was a lie, of the imagination, perhaps not of the intention, but all the same a lie! For look you, that angular little mightiness of a woman was ugly, and knew it, and was nowhere more ugly than in that most strange eye of hers. You know that noble brow? Well back, far back, deep-sunken beneath it were the eyes, small, black opaque and flattened like—truly it has not a good sound—but they were like the eyes of a great serpent. No—you do not like that? But wait now. Can you, can I, can another, look at a thing steadily, steadily, unwinkingly for a minute at a time? Mais non! non! The eye it blur, it pain, it cry, and at last it wink for rest, for pity of itself, eh? But that dense, cold, black eye of Rachel, when there was rage behind it, would look at you with an unwinking, unwavering intensity of evil, that chilled your blood, dulled your thoughts and left you helpless, just as a bird is helpless when the unwinking serpent eye has mesmerised it."

"Was there truth then," I asked, "in the story told of the public crushing of Mademoiselle Maxime by Rachel?"

The old woman worked the tip of her nose as a rabbit does. She tapped the counter with trembling fingers: "Truth? You ask it? *Dieu de Dieu!* Was I there then, with all the other Jews, or was I not? Some were for Maxime,—who mind you was handsome and not so bad an actress either; and besides

Rachel had behaved badly toward Paris and the home theatre, and many wanted to punish her. So the Maxime party was strong and Rachel had the very devil's self pent up in her that night. The Félix crowd were wild with fright and everyone chuckled at sight of their faces. It was a great night. The whole city seemed to be packed into the theatre. Maxime's party applauded and hissed; Rachel's party hissed and applauded, and so they yelled and shouted and clapped and stamped, until *Mary Stuart* and *Elizabeth* met and faced each other; and, Madame, there came then a silence that was like death! The audience saw Rachel's face and a sigh passed over the crowded house—for we had expected a struggle to the death, mind you. But that face—Oh, mon Dieu!—we felt the end already! The scene began. *Elizabeth* was doing well—Rachel as *Mary* waited, with her arms folded, her sleek head lowered a little, she fastened upon Maxime's face dull black eyes of such malignant hate, that one felt a chill at the roots of the hair. *Elizabeth* started, then made a swift gesture and went bravely on, but she could not break away from the intensifying power of the cold eyes that clung to her until her own glance met theirs. Then at the unwinking, baleful stare, she gave a gasp, a visible trembling passed over her whole body. She spoke and a hoarseness came into her voice. She strove desperately to escape Rachel's unwavering eye; strove in anguish—spoke again—stammered—hesitated—and was lost. *Mary Stuart's* opportunity came then, but never in her whole life did Rachel give rein to such mad passion

as on that night! Paris raved over her; was at her feet again; Maxime was ruined; but, Madame, a young English artist who sat with us in the cheap places, cried out, all furious: 'Ah, but that was damnable!' *Eh, bien,* perhaps it was, but that was the power of the dull black eye I tell you of. Sometimes in the great moments of the grand tragedy I have seen a glow come, a kind of red smoulder, but never, oh, never in the world the flash, the blaze, the gleam! She seemed too, Madame, sometimes far up above us all—the tragedy of all the earth—the love of all lovers—the grace of all women seemed to be in her own heart" (Ah, I thought, my rain-drop), "and it was out of her heart that she acted at least part of the time."

Hungrily I listened to some scraps of information about her costuming. Everyone wrote and raved over the exquisite grace with which she wore her Greek draperies, "Merely cast carelessly about her," one critic said, "yet falling always in such statuesque folds." Poor Rose had another tale to tell. Every fold was arranged, pinned, studied in the glass, walked in, studied again, abandoned, another tried and yet another, until the perfect line and fold being attained at last, they were secured by patiently placed stitches. She was fond too of "making up her face" with almost no rouge for many of the parts she played, *Tisbé* being one of the few characters for which she dressed brilliantly and painted high. "When," said my old woman, "she had made-up with an unbroken whiteness, that her jetty hair, eye-

brows and eyes made marble-like, and had touched her sensitive lips with a vivid scarlet, she looked—she looked like——" She hesitated.

I suggested, "like a beautiful portrait of Tragedy? For surely such a make-up, beside being artistic, must have been very becoming to the woman who wore it."

The yellow-flecked eyes suddenly took on a new sharpness. She laid an inquiring finger on my arm: "You, Madame, is it possible that you are yourself of the stage? *Oui—tant mieux!* I grow old of a certainty—I should have seen. Oh, *la! la!* by a dozen things, I should have seen. From America you come—from that far, sad land, where the great Rachel laid down the sceptre. You, you cannot have seen her? No; I was sure, and you are not even of her race, yet you seek to know all, everything. You question like the child. Why, Madame? What think you then of her?"

And from an extravagant impulse, I answered: "I think her the mightiest Jewess since the times of Miriam and Deborah."

Her old mouth worked as she caught my gloved hand to her lips, and said huskily: "*Merci—Merci!*" many times. "It is you see that sometimes I have, Madame, the fear that Paris here forgets a little, and it makes the pain. No? you think not? All America makes honour to that memory, you say? Good! Eh? What, you do not admire *père* Félix, not even the beau Raphael? A-ah!" she straightened up, gave a sigh of satisfaction and then, with the tone peculiar

to the dealer in misfit garments, she said: "Madame has the judgment of the best, and—and doubtless you are an artiste of high standing," and then surprised me by taking from my hand an old bit of metal: "Non, Madame, that is not for you!"

"But," I remonstrated, "it is old German work."

"Non," she interrupted, "the placard says old German work, but it came truly from across the Seine. It is not for a woman who bends the head to the memory of the great Rachel, whom she has not even seen!"

And in the scorching heat, she crossed the walk, placed me in the voiture and opened my parasol and laid my packages upon my knee—all, with the manner of one attending upon an enfeebled Grande Duchesse.

Then the *cocher* cracked his whip over the unimpressed, heat-dried unfortunates between the shafts, who slowly got in motion. We both glanced back—both spoke a last sentence. The voices were different, but my "Thanks, Madame, for your memories of Rachel!" was cut across by her: "Thanks, Madame, for your memory of Rachel!" and so with the great name upon our lips we parted.

One dreary wet Sunday, nearly a year later, I lay in a hotel room in Louisville and with frowning brows watched Dr. Yandell as he bandaged the ankle I had injured the night before. The season was nearing its close and I was homesick. In the great splashing pattern of the carpet I seemed to see faces that

mocked me; the marble mantel looked like a tombstone. My almost indestructible cheerfulness was giving way before these things combined with pain. The doctor had just mentioned some incident connected with the days when he walked the hospital floors as a student in Paris. Paris! I glanced at him. Yes, there were touches of grey about his stately head, he might perhaps,—and swiftly the question, the inevitable question flew from my lips: "Doctor, did you ever see Rachel?"

The quick glint in his lifted eyes, the involuntary tug upon the bandage answered me before his slow Southern speech could, and scrambling up upon my pillows, unrelentingly I wrung the doctor's memory dry of everything it held anent Rachel. He, as a young student had made the acquaintance of Raphael and his great sister by a ludicrous collision in a dark hallway. Apologies, laughter, and the discovery that they sought a mutual friend's apartment led to an introduction. Then followed an impromptu little game of cards and to the intellectual enslavement of young Yandell by the reigning queen of the world of Art. In his opinion the trip to America had been a veritable tragedy. Never had there been any folly to equal the folly of Raphael. He had been made mad by the story of Jenny Lind's 1,700,000 francs earned in thirty-eight performances. He could not be brought to listen to reason. He gave no thought to Barnum, that tremendous factor in the *diva's* success. He forgot that music appeals to all classes, can be enjoyed regardless of the language in which it is sung. Forgot

that tragedy appealed to the cultivated few, even in France—there was no reason in him. He had made him a molten calf, and the golden dazzle of it blinded him to the realities of life and common sense.

Rachel had been most unwilling to undertake the expedition, but that family of hers conspired against her. Abraham—Raphael—Sarah—Dinah—Leah—*mère* Félix, all united in pointing to the land of gold. They gave her no peace. Ah, well, all that is history, said the doctor.

"But oh, could you have seen the shame, the wounded pride, the silent suffering of the great woman, who found she had been made an instrument for the advancement of her family's interests!"

"Shame?" I exclaimed. "Why should she be ashamed?"

"Good God!" excitedly answered the doctor, "have you not heard of the inconceivable parsimony of Raphael? Rachel had her faults, but she did truly reverence her art; but here in this country art was not thought of, the cry was Dollars! Dollars! The brother who managed for her would not expend one cent even to secure correct properties; and permitted the most ludicrous blunders in stage setting to pass uncorrected, such as a flowered carpet covering a Roman street. Many a time the curtain rose on a stately tragedy to the convulsed laughter of the audience—so absurd would the scenery be."

"I had" continued the doctor, "hesitated to present myself to Madame in America, thinking it very probable she had forgotten me, but at our meeting

here, in Louisville, she greeted me as a friend and did me the honour to ask me to accompany her, for a time at least. You can imagine with what willingness I placed myself at her service. But that family, Good Heaven! that family! Jealous, malicious, covetous, they all were! Quarrelsome as they all were, yet one there was who terrorised all the others, including even the father and Rachel herself. In times of family mishap or of serious illness Sarah was the devoted sister and nurse, but the moment the draft upon her sympathy had been honoured, she became a terror. She domineered over everyone; she meddled in everything, and on the slightest provocation she would burst into a furious rage, using the *argot* picked up in her street-singing days; making charges of theft, of falsehood and often, indeed generally, using her hands, even her nails as freely as she did her angry words.

"It was between Raphael and Sarah that dissensions oftenest arose. Rachel dreaded such scenes greatly and strove to maintain the peace which she had invariably to purchase with a gift to each participant in the fray. Her own self-control was wonderful. She always, save in one instance, preserved a quiet dignity of manner that was admirable; but that one outburst I shall never forget.

"Gambling was as the breath of life to her. You look startled, but it is quite true. She loved cards passionately, so did they all love them, but in a lesser degree. When she could not rise from her bed she would have a board brought and laid across her

knees. To face her in white gown and delicate lace cap, frail and shadowed, her thin fingers deftly manipulating the cards, was like gambling with a phantom. I had forbidden playing for high stakes because the intense excitement engendered was injurious to her. She had given me a droll look, but smiling indulgently, had said 'Very well, she would play for pennies, if I so commanded,' a form of speech that covered me with confusion, for I was far too young to venture to command a Rachel even for her own good.

"Well on the day of which I speak, she and a sister were playing at the bedside. Rose admitted me to the room and with a quick glance in their direction, shook her head disapprovingly. No wonder. Rachel was trembling violently, but her eyes were fixed in a stare of such concentrated anger that I felt a chill creep over me. On her side of the board about a dozen copper pennies lay; on Sarah's side there must have been thirty or forty. Rachel never greeted me, never winked even, but, in that unbroken stare, said very low: 'Go on, Mademoiselle, you have a very remarkable *luck* to-day!'

"In high, angry tones, Sarah answered: 'Don't you try to look me down, Madame Greatness!'

"'Play!' commanded Rachel.

"And then it was all like the flash, the crash of a volley of musketry," said the doctor, throwing out his hands helplessly, "and before I could cross the room there came the words: 'Cheat! Thief!' and the board was flying through the air, pennies were

everywhere! Sarah was in the middle of the chamber; the bedclothes were flung aside, and with the leap of a tigress Rachel flung herself upon her sister and caught at her throat, and eight small red dents showed where her fingers struck before her strength fled and she sank back unconscious into my arms.

"I never heard such vituperation from human lips as poured from Sarah Félix's as I carried her sister back to her bed. But when she saw the still form, the bluish lips, she flung herself beside her, rubbing the limp hands, breathing into her mouth, forcing brandy down her throat, and doing it all like a woman demented with grief. Then when at last breath had returned to the patient, and a long attack of coughing had been reckoned with, Sarah, tired, dishevelled, stood looking down on her exhausted sister and remarked resentfully: 'And all that, mind you, because I cheated her out of a few pennies—there's a sister for you, Monsieur.'

"And so I learned that Rachel had as her birthright the violent temper of the Félix family, and surely she deserved credit for so nearly conquering it. She saw every doctor who was suggested to her, and one and all they said: 'Rest—rest now—immediately, and in this balmy air you will probably recover.' Everyone avoided the word 'lungs,' all spoke of the 'larynx,' until in Charleston a French doctor boldly informed her her lungs were affected. Then she began to realise her danger.

"'I ought to rest,' she would say, piteously to Raphael, whose face would become sullen in a mo-

ment. When she coughed the girls would shrug their shoulders and tap their feet impatiently. They made her feel that she was injuring them greatly. They sighed and moaned over the 'failure she had made.' Though the receipts exceeded anything they had ever played to in Europe, they yet fell so far below Raphael's mad dreams and expectations that the family made most piteous outcries."

The doctor thought that, from being with her all the time, they failed to perceive the change in her appearance, but the rest of the company, who had reached Charleston before her, were startled at the alteration of only those few days. It would be too painful to repeat the doctor's story of her eager watching for a fairly comfortable day, in which to write letters to her mother and her sons—brave, bright, hopeful letters. Of her silent despair on the bad days when the cough gave her no rest, and the pain beneath the shoulders tortured her; while a mighty homesickness wrung her very soul with anguish. She was pulled one way by the doctors; pulled the other way by her family, Oh, poor Rachel! Listen to her own words, written even in the heyday of her power:

"My success is wonderful, but purchased at what a price. The price alas, of my health and life. The intoxication of applause passes into my blood and burns it up. The public, the world see the artist, but they forget the woman!"

Was it not Ouida who said: "The laurel hurts when it grows from the tender breast of a woman!"

Next to the joy of having seen the famous actress I would count the joy of owning a certain picture, one of those Dr. Seguin so wisely kept under double locks. A tiny thing, but oh, the delight of it. There is the Rachel of one's imagination. Yet young in all her hope, her just springing pride, her vaulting ambition. She had greatly desired to play *Phèdre,* but had been told she was too small for the part. She was highly indignant, and Alfred de Musset, the poet, the beau, the beloved of George Sand, who had just written his famous "Nuit de Mai," one night after *Tancred,* had returned home with Rachel; had supped with the family and afterward she had eagerly requested him to listen to her reading of the great part of *Phèdre.* And in this wonderful little picture these two gifted children of France, ever young, ever triumphant, face each other at the table, where the few dishes are pushed aside; where one guttering candle has been reinforced by another hastily thrust into a wine bottle; where Rachel, in a loose sacque, with a cap formed of a foulard handkerchief upon her hair, sits, the book held in one hand, while the other is stretched out in declamatory, illuminating gesture. And De Musset leans his folded arms upon the shabby table and gazes as at an inspired young priestess.

This is not the woman of whom afterward it was said: "She seeks not glory, but gold,"—this is the aspiring, passionate, young student; this is the girl who calmly passed from her sordid home into the drawing-rooms of the greatest aristocrats of France,

and by her modest self-possession and gentle dignity astonished and charmed all who met her.

I gazed and gazed at the small picture and suddenly a thought came to me: "Dr. Seguin," I said, "George Sand and Rachel disliked each other intensely did they not?"

"Yes," he answered, "and I never could find a satisfactory reason for that dislike—a cause."

I laughed, and putting my finger on De Musset, I asked: "Is not *this* the cause?" An amused, almost mocking, look came into his face: "Well, well! leave a woman to divine a thing. Now Paris generally thought that George Sand was piqued because Rachel would not accept a play of hers, and yet I remember now, George Sand always spoke generously of Rachel, while Rachel was ever bitter and satirical in her comments on the writer."

"Naturally," I remarked, "as Sand was strong enough to hold her poet at her side and defeat was ever bittter to the actress."

Again I returned to the study of the picture where the poet of France sits in wrapt attention opposite Rachel, pale, slight, gifted with the divine power, the perfect tact, the wondrous grace, that won her the allegiance of the most accomplished men in France, the most illustrious in the literary world, the most eminent statesmen and most talented politicians. This is the Rachel that creates the glamour, that wins the love, that fires the imagination. This is the actress that raised the people to her level, never sinking her art to them—Rachel, artiste as we wish to

remember her before the family had forced her attention to the golden mirage that dazzled their own eyes; before they had injected the poison of avarice into her veins. This girl still has nobility, pride, enthusiasm, courage!

The tears came swiftly to my eyes, for in the dim, dim background, I had just caught sight of a fat old woman, asleep in a chair—*mère* Félix, of course! "Oh," I cried, "she can't escape them even here!"

The doctor looked over my shoulder and quoted sarcastically: "They have made them a molten calf and have worshipped it," while I, wet-eyed, added: "And have *sacrificed* thereunto," and was silly enough to bend my head and press my lips to the pictured face of the great Rachel!

XII

THE MORMON BANQUO

I WAS in New York in a mad pursuit of Santa Claus, and I had been cheated by a cab driver. I knew it and he knew I knew it—which was a comfort; but when, tired and hungry, I faced homeward, rather than stand and deliver a second time, I said, "I will take my life in my hands along with my parcels, and I will clamber into one of those cars where there is always room 'up front,' and I will cling to the life line, if I can reach a strap"; and all this I did until a tall man wearing the wide-brimmed black felt hat that finds favour in the Far West, rose and gravely unhooked me from the life line, placed me in his former seat and then piled my parcels in a neat little barricade about me. As I lifted grateful eyes and began a murmur of thanks I met a glance of tense inquiry and—and, yes, a look of full recognition. I paused and my brow began to knit helplessly.

"Well," he asked, removing his hat, "you can't make me out—you can't place me, eh?" But just then the great curved scar high on his forehead prompted me so plainly that I was able to answer, "Your name? No; I can't make that out—I've lost it, but I can place you at a late hour of the afternoon, in a very fine shop for very beautiful things in far Salt Lake City," and gave him my hand in greeting.

"A-ah!" he exclaimed, "but you have a remarkable memory." And I wanted to answer, "A-ah you wear a remarkable scar." He bent his tall figure and peered anxiously out at the street numbers, then, reassured, he spoke again:

"I wouldn't ask this question of anyone else, but, as your memory seems so exceptional, do you—that is, is there anything interesting going on at Washington just now that recalls our conversation in Salt Lake City?"

I thought hard for a moment. Salt Lake—the great Mormon city? Washington—the seat of government; army, navy, Congress? "Oh," I exclaimed, "Mr. Smoot! Do you mean the Mormon Senator?"

He laughed a laugh that turned many eyes in his direction. "Ah," he cried, "confess now that you took a needless amount of salt with the statements I made—the arguments I advanced that day? And admit that certain things have occurred within a year that go far to prove the truth of my assertion that in Mormondom polygamy and blood atonement will not down?"

"Like *Banquo's* ghost," I smiled. But he smiled not at all, and went on. "You jest, but you speak truth all the same. The Mormon *Banquo's*—yes, the ghost was a pretty powerful factor in the downfall of Macbeth, I believe, and more feared than a dozen living—er—what the dickens is the word?"

"Thanes?" I suggested.

"That's it! Queer sort of title, too. Well, if I knew no more about Mormons than I do about

Thanes I'd keep still, like Br'er Rabbit; but this is only the second time I've been out of Salt Lake in twenty-six years, so I know Mormonism pretty well —its good qualities and its bad ones. Clever people, yes, but not at all American. They love Utah, but not the United States. Instinctively they secretly range themselves against the government; their forbears were inimical, too. No other country in the world would allow a festering sore on the body politic to spread as this is doing without an effort being made to prevent, to heal, or to eradicate it."

Again I put in a frivolous word. "Wait until woman as trained nurse discovers this threatened infection, and she will call upon the surgeons to do their duty."

"Well, God haste the day!" he said. "You only laugh, but all the same, woman is the natural enemy of Mormonism. Mark my words—this Mormon *Banquo* will not down, and it will eventually be the hand of the American woman that will collar the neck and trim the claws of the great Utah Panther that, guarded by the natural barricades of desert waste and mountain fastness, has worked its savage will without interference. Ah, you think me a crank—I can see it in your face."

I laughed a trifle uncomfortably, for if anyone ever does read your thought it's bound to be the one you would prefer to keep it from. But I responded:—"You shouldn't object to the term. Think what useful people cranks are. But for them we might settle down into the dull content that means

stolidity. You see, cranks stir us up to that divine discontent that leads to effort and improved conditions."

"Oh," he cried; "here's my street! Good-bye! Next time you come to Salt Lake I'd like to bring my wife and daughter to call. Then you will know what cranks really are. They are devoted to Mormon women, but detest Mormon men. Good-bye!" and my nameless friend was off, rushing toward the depot, while I, staring through the windows, seemed to see the strange, turtle-backed Tabernacle, the peaks and points of that pretentious temple, that, like a bottomless well, swallows unceasingly good Mormon money, yet is never quite completed—for mentally I was in Salt Lake, not in New York.

Then suddenly rose in my memory the cold, calm face and woful eyes of Mrs. P——, the polygamus wife, who had been one of those "put away" in obedience to the new law. I remembered how I had said to her:—"Your religion is a difficult one to understand, is it not?"

"Far from it," she replied with intense bitterness. "Pay and obey—there you have the Mormon religion; and for a certain class of believers, it is eminently satisfactory, for if they pay readily and obey silently they are free to do pretty much as they please with all other laws, and they will never be called to account for any wrongdoing outside the Church."

"But," I said, somewhat sharply, "you were not born to the faith; you were a convert. It is the religion you yourself accepted."

One quick flash came into the weary eyes. "Oh, no—Oh, no! This is not the religion I accepted—not the religion of peace and brotherly love and holiness that was preached to us in rural England. There are no better missionaries on earth than the Mormons. They are most carefully selected, then most carefully trained for their lifework. They must be men of a certain dignified presence, of suave and persuasive manner, with a great flow of language. Along with these speakers there is invariably an accompanying elder, who attends to all the financial matters. Each is a specialist, so together their work is well done. Do you think the word 'polygamy' is even breathed to those gatherings of women, most of whom have found life hard and ugly?

"The only 'blood atonement' that is mentioned then is that of our Master and Saviour. Oh, if you could only hear them describe heaven on earth in this Zion City of Salt Lake, where sin is unknown, where all live in innocent, loving brotherhood and work to the honour of God and His prophets! The religion I accepted was a peaceful, sinless serving. No, no shadow is allowed to fall across a convert's faith and enthusiasm until she has emigrated and reached the Mormon country. Then she faces the Endowment House, polygamy begins to coil around her, and, cringing before the blood atonement terror, she becomes that soulless thing, a woman whose only hope of heaven lies in being sealed to some male Mormon!"

Then a swift colour came into her cheek, while in a

perfectly even tone she continued:—"Oh, it will be no trouble—I was walking in that direction myself."

I was utterly at sea, but somehow managed to say: "Thank you very much." She glanced significantly then at a woman in shabby black who loitered near us, looking into the shop windows. "It is the church system," she explained. "I'm 'cold' in the faith. I'm seen walking with a Gentile, a travelling woman—maybe, by chance, I'm trying to leave town."

I shivered. "Will they question her about you?"

She sneered. "Oh, better than that—they will question me. Have I seen her lately, and with whom? If I say 'No,' they will enjoy the very refinement of espionage in making me condemn myself. But I shall say, 'Let me see—y-yes, I think I saw Sister Brown the day I was showing the Gentile woman to a store.'"

"And then?"

"Well, then, Sister Brown will receive praise for her exact report, and I shall be more suspected than ever; so we all spy, one upon another."

I had done most of my Christmas shopping in San Francisco, but now found myself three gifts short, and on Friday afternoon of that week I went out to see what I could find that was pretty, and so wandered into the handsome shop of the man who had recognised me just now. Nothing is more conducive to sudden confidences between strangers than the discovery of a taste in common. So in our mutual admiration for two or three really fine intaglios, which in twelve or fifteen years of exhibition had never won

a glance of appreciation, the proprietor expanded. He was a resident Gentile—I was a visiting Gentile. We met in the great Mormon city of Salt Lake. There could be but one result—a talk on Mormonism, in which eager conversation developed into the personal confidences of a man who had been forced by physical causes to live in this land, and who for twenty odd years had neighboured with the Mormon people. When I ventured the remark that, to me, an utter outsider, it always seemed that the greatest enemies of this body of people were their leaders, he exclaimed:—"There, you have crowded the whole business into a nutshell. The Mormon missionary seeks the agricultural people, the slow, honest, sober, well meaning, who in gratitude for escaping hardships, military service, etc., gladly pay heavy tithes to the Church. But in the case of the clever, brainy man, the Mormon Church makes direct appeal, either to his ambition, his craving to exercise personal power over others, or to his lust."

"Strong, rapacious, cruel men rise high in this Church, the very breath of whose life is hypocrisy. It was three years before they gave up all hope of making a Mormon of me, so I know what I am talking about. These people assume the attitude of martyrs and declare they are persecuted for religion's sake. In this land of religious liberty why need there be secrecy about one's faith? Secrecy implies either fear or evil intent. Why, then, does the Mormon Church demand of a newcomer first of all silence, absolute obedience and the oath to avenge the blood of

the prophets (Smith and the rest) upon this government. The truth is, Mormonism is not a religion—it is a secret society—a travesty on Masonry. You know, nearly all the founders of Mormonism were Masons, and this feature is most evident in the secret endowments. The horrors of polygamy are beyond the imagination of you outsiders, and let me say casually there were no tears shed by Mormons when they heard of the death of Miss Kate Field, who was a dreaded foe, keen, fearless, and, as they believed, with power at her back.

" Clever, astute, ambitious people, suave hypocrisy is their strongest card. You do not hear them bluster or boast at Washington, where they play the patient misunderstood. But here, Lord!—well " (he laughed a little as he continued), " if a Mormon offers you his right hand, you want to keep your eyes tightly glued to the left while you clasp it. Never is a Mormon more dangerous politically than when he is seemingly making a concession. These people are foes to the government. Their so-called religion is treasonable, yet if an outsider inquires into it, the warning word speeds forth, ' Preach only the first principles '—meaning repentance, baptism for remission of sins, etc., all the sweet and gentle things preached by missionaries everywhere. Polygamy, blood atonement, treasonable endowments and blind obedience—they are called the ' holy mysteries ' and are only to be preached to the very elect gathered in Zion. No, these Jesuits will never give to the public the Masonic key that will unlock the riddle of their

Church, but put your finger on polygamy and you can feel the whole structure tremble. The brutalities of the past are unspeakable.

"Think of John D. Lee's claim of nineteen wives and sixty-four children. Such wholesale marrying cannot be safely practised now, but the agony and shame of smirched womanhood is with us still. Have you noticed how many women here of early middle life, well dressed, well fleshed, wear all the same dull, stolid expression? Mormon men will draw your attention to this well-fed apathy and call it perfect contentment with polygamy; but those that know can tell you that rage over broken vows, shame over humiliations, griefs over lost loves all proving useless, they have recognised their abject helplessness, and at last, like other animals, they accept shelter, food and drink and ask no more. Wounds may be many and deep, but where mortification sets in the throbbing pain and agony are stilled. These women will sit still and silent, and lift neither voice nor finger to protest now, for suffering is dulled, and one does not expect the moribund to ward off the hand of desecration. But the young—are they to suffer, too? Why will not the happier women of the land turn their attention to this plague—polygamy?"

"They do not know," I hazarded. "It's so far away—so like a myth, and——"

"Oh," he interrupted; "they may wake up some day to find it unpleasantly near them. These people would be mighty proud of a few converts from the great Eastern cities."

"Oh," I cried, "do you think——"

"I know that missionaries are being sent now, who will not take the steamer, as usual."

"But people in the East believe polygamy dead." He smiled sardonically. "Well, it is illegal," I insisted.

"It is only practised more privately and with some merriment at the expense of the government, that's about all. By the way, when the struggle was on over polygamy our Mormon Representative wept over the loss of caste the put-away polygamous wife would suffer, declaring she would be regarded by the world in the light of a lawless woman, an unnamable creature, which was a brutality that probably never entered any mind but his own. He was one of the many who thought it an outrage that the first wife married should be held as the legal mate, instead of the last and youngest one."

"What was the real position of a put-away, polygamous wife?"

"Why, she was looked upon and treated by the Gentiles as a widow or possibly as a *divorcée;* but as a nameless creature, as he suggested, never! never! While the Mormons paid her extra deference as a sort of martyr."

As I prepared to leave the store he said:—"Remember, Mormonism will surprise you some day in the East. It always is willing to creep until it can stand quite firmly. You will hear that there is no blood atonement, and it will be just as dead as polygamy, which is as dead as I am. At this moment

they are preparing some new tools—bright young fellows. If they show gifts they are looked after, are educated, made much of by the great ones of the Church. A lad's heart is theirs then, naturally, and when his powers ripen they are at the command of those who have developed them. As I said, some new tools are now in preparation and in a few years you may hear of them. Good-bye."

Next day I caught, by merest chance, one tiny peep at Mormonism that was funny, and yet—and yet—— There was a double box party on the left of the stage. One box held four ladies and, for a little while, one gentleman. In the furthest box were seated five little girls and three little boys; and the matinée had but just started when our interest was aroused by hearing that these were the Mormon children of one father and three mothers.

"Oh, of course," in answer to our surprised looks, "the wives no longer live as one family, but—er—er—on certain occasions they meet just as they meet all their friends."

And so we went on with our work, and would have given them no further thought but for the manner in which the play affected the little people. True, the house was mostly in tears, but the passionate grief of the tiniest tot of them all came near to breaking up our scene on the stage. I was, as *Odette,* in opposition to my husband, and alternately threatened, wept, prayed and pleaded for a sight of my own child. While the boys squirmed uncomfortably and the four small maids, with wet little wads of handkerchiefs,

dabbed at their eyes, the eldest miss sat frigidly, with supercilious brows, and from beneath contemptuously drooped lids sent side glances of disapproval toward her too emotional small sisters. But when the Count, with savage sarcasm, absolutely refused to allow the pleading mother to see, even for a moment, the child of her love, that mere baby in the box, between suffocating gasps, cried out, "Oh, please! oh, please!" and turning laid her little arm along the chair back, dropped her head upon it and broke into sobs that shook her small body.

As the curtain fell a wailing voice cried: "Mama! mama!" One of the ladies heard, and rising hastily, went to the next box, but just as she entered the sobbing mite lifted her tear-wet face and in a disappointed voice said: "No! no! Not that one! I want my mama!"

No. 1 withdrew, meeting No. 3 entering hastily. The weeping baby lifted an eager face, that clouded instantly, and throwing out not only an arm, but one slippered foot, in strong repulsion, she cried: "Not you—no, not you! Oh!"—with piercing insistence—"I want my very own mama!"

The audience laughed. Some of us behind the scenes laughed, too; yet many eyes were wet. That open, honest demand of nature, "I want my own mama," made us wonder how often an equally natural cry had been wrung from women's hearts: "I want my husband! My own husband!"

I have not been to Salt Lake since, but here was this merchant to remind me of his prophecies—and

many of them have come true. We have been surprised by finding Mormons teaching in our very schools and winning converts from our own homes. Blood atonement has been denied again and again, yet the other day, in Utah, a condemned Mormon criminal had his sentence of hanging changed to shooting so that he might atone with his blood and thus alone be saved to eternal happiness. Of the clever new men who were being prepared for certain service, we may find one, perhaps, in Mr. Smoot. Altogether, I fancy my unnamed merchant friend knew fairly well what he was talking about. Will his last prophecy come true—will women defeat polygamy? Will they exorcise the Mormon *Banquo?* I hope so—I pray so!

XIII

MAJOR McKINLEY—A MEMORY

IT lies before me, a simple bit of pasteboard such as any hotel may offer to the cardless caller upon a patron. White once, but yellowing now, a mere bit of pasteboard, but enriched and made inestimably precious by a few written words of courtesy, signed—clearly and firmly signed—"William McKinley."

Wonderful is the power of association, for the sight of this scrap of cardboard brings back the brassy blare of bands, the earth tremble of marching feet in serried ranks and all the redundancy of shouting that forms part of every political jubilation—but swelled beyond all bounds by the joy-mad men who were not merely adherents and partisans, but loyal friends of the man who had just become Governor of the fair broad State of Ohio.

The clang of bell, the martial music, the drum and cheer—all brought back by that small card, and more—the picture, too, of that State's idol, the happy-faced, clean-handed, new Governor standing in the State House, shaking hands with delirious constituents, many of whom had uncomplainingly, even jokingly, lost portions of their clothing in the struggle to reach that kindly hand; yet in the midst of intoxicating triumph calling a halt—reclaiming his hand—demanding a moment that he might write a line or

two with his hat crown for a desk, because forsooth a message of congratulation from one almost a stranger had reached him; but the writer being a woman, with exampled courtesy, then and there, he acknowledged it.

So, these hasty words, valued highly then, are doubly precious now as they look back at me from this old card that recalls so much. And this strong, clear "William McKinley"—it is more than a mere sign manual, it is a symbol, a manifestation of character. There is no reticence about a signature. In the slang of to-day, "it gives the writer away, every time." The name William McKinley would lend itself so splendidly to the flourishing, spread-eagle style of the skilled penman. Why it could be fairly tied up in loop and flourish and understroke—but instead absolutely without the vanity of curlycues or the affectation of illegibility, it is written clearly, boldly, simply. There is no laziness to be found in it, every letter is there, well formed, and the signature, legible to all, is an index to the character of the simple, brave, duty-loving man, whose sign-manual it was.

I put my card away for safety, and doing so I recall that bitter winter's night in Cleveland, when I first saw the man whose death has moved the world. At the theatre we shivered in our dressing-rooms, and jested over the probability of people preferring the cheerful company of their picturesque steam radiators to the large unfriendly draughts of the chilly opera house. For there is no better city than Cleve-

land for the location of an energetic cold wave, since Erie is always ready to blow into the game of having fun with freezing citizens—and we were united in our expectations of a light house and also in our envy of those who remained in comfortable homes. The curtain went up with a lonely, rattling rush upon the first act of "The New Magdalen." In the entrance a member of the company, bundled in shawls, was pushing up her sleeves, while describing her sufferings from the cold, and as I approached, she addressed me, saying: "I have newly established a fleshly school of acting." Then at my raised brows, the wretch stretched out her bare arm all bristling with the cold, and suavely added: "See—a *goose*-fleshly school!"

And ordering her instantly to the public execution she richly deserved, I turned laughingly and looked across the stage right into the private box. Looked—and ceased to laugh. Looked—*stared,* until the cold of actual fear was added to that of the low temperature. His back to the "house," his face to the stage, his arms folded high upon his chest, a man sat there alone. White as marble, immovable as stone, the down-pouring light from a chandelier directly above his head, made cavernous shadows about his fixedly gazing eyes—but the likeness! Good Heaven! the chilling likeness! The great brow, strong eyebrows, prominent nose, set lips, firm chin, settling toward the somewhat old-fashioned neckwear—but all so still, so coldly immovable—was it after all only a portrait and a trick of light? A picture of—— Suddenly I

appealed to a man approaching behind me: "What—'er—who—'er—is that over there?"

The man leaned over me to see better, started violently and exclaimed: "Good God! look at Daniel Webster—sitting in the box!"

"Oh!" I gasped, "can you see it, too?"

Which brought forth the censorious remark: "You have believed me to be afflicted with double-cataract, evidently?"

But sarcasm was wasted on me just then, for in answer to my cue I was entering, speaking my first lines in the opposite direction. When I faced that box and its motionless occupant—and met full the steady, penetrating glance of the eyes that alone seemed alive in that waxen mask, I wavered, stammered and for the only time in their lives my companions saw me stand one instant helpless as any debutante. Then, tightening up my nerves, I said to myself: "Man—picture or ghost! I must go on!" and I did so.

The woman playing the opposite part gazed up at me with amazement and whispered: "What is it—are you ill?"

She sat with her back to the box, and presently I murmured, under cover of her stage speech: "Look behind you!"

Slowly she turned her head—as I took up my stage reply—then she started fairly out of her chair, sank back again heavily and almost aloud, exclaimed: "Daniel Webster!"

It was a genuine comfort to me to know others could see the wonderful resemblance the man bore

to the great dead. The act was no sooner over than man and woman were asking who was in the box—and though I had a quick change of costume to make, I, too, demanded information on that point, and a property-boy dropped the fireplace he was carrying away on his head, that he might look sharper daggers at me—while exclaiming reproachfully: "Well, this *is* a cold night! I thought you was an Ohio woman, Miss Morris—yet here you are asking who is our Major McKinley!" He took his fireplace upon his head again, muttering: "That's what I call rough!" while excited and pleased I flew to my dressing-room, announcing over the transom to all and sundry, that it was not the great *shade* Webster who was in the box, but the great reality—Major McKinley.

Through all the five long acts of that play, Mr. McKinley's concentrated attention never wavered. Everyone did their best, the men in particular seemed put upon their mettle by the presence and the manner of the famous man. He sat quietly during the action of the play, but at each fall of the curtain he applauded generously, then folded his arms and waited for what came next.

At the close of the performance I was asked if I would like to meet Ohio's great speaker, and a few moments later big and cheery Mr. Hanna was giving me cordial greeting and presenting the man whose fame was even then spreading like the green bay tree, far, far beyond the bounds of his own State—and as our hands and eyes met, I gave an exclamation of astonishment. The ready smile, the bright, quick eye,

the genial manner made him seem positively boyish in comparison with the stern immobility of his former manner.

My husband, the manager, and Mr. Hanna were wrestling with political questions, and Mr. McKinley and I were exchanging jests and weather stories, when I suddenly remarked that our play could hardly have been to his taste and its length must have wearied him?

"On the contrary!" he quickly answered. "On the contrary!" The smiles disappeared, the lips set themselves firmly, the penetrating expression came to his eyes—suddenly he wore the Webster look again, as he went on: "It's a good play—it's a moral play. I followed it with interest. She had a noble character, that woman [*Mercy Merrick*]. I thought once she was lost—that she was going under, but," a gleam lighting his eyes, "she did redeem herself after all. I tell you what, that was a fine sight and a fine moment, when she conquered herself there!" and all the actress in me bowed in gratitude before the man who could so far yield himself up to his own imagination and the influence of the play, as to speak of its creatures as real human beings, and to rejoice in their moral victories.

Another remark of his I carefully hoarded up for the pleasure of some of the members of my company. He said: "By the way, Miss Morris, your gentlemen who played military parts to-night were more like real soldiers than any I ever saw on the stage before."

These words I faithfully repeated where they would do the most good, but remained silent as to the next ones. For with eyes all dancing with fun, he added: "That's a clever fellow that does the German army surgeon."

"Why," I said, "I thought his dialect open to suspicion?"

"Oh, bother the dialect," answered Mr. McKinley, "that was good enough—it got its laugh, but as he did not even know where to feel for a pulse, I wondered what would become of him when he came to the handling of that wound, but"—he threw back his head and laughed at the memory—"he was clever though, for he turned his broad, broad back to the audience and performed a delicate operation quite successfully all in the dark." Truly he had given undivided attention to the performance.

Knowing Mr. McKinley to be a noble orator, I was much amused to hear him indulge in a real country boy's colloquialism, while when he was moved to sudden hearty laughter he would strike his right foot sharply upon the ground and whirl lightly about on it—a movement inexpressibly youthful, and one I had not seen since out at school in Portage county, where the big boys did it at the climax of some outrageous fishing story.

Once I asked: "Mr. McKinley, has anyone ever mentioned your resemblance"—his quick half-annoyed glance said someone had, but I went on—"mentioned your resemblance—which at some moments is very marked—to Daniel Webster?"

And soldier, statesman and orator as he was, he found no better answer than an averted head, a little push of the hand and a petulant: "Oh, go 'long!"

Everyone in the room broke into laughter—so unexpected and in such delicious contradiction to the man's already exalted position, was that rustic, almost bashful: "Oh, go 'long!"

We had resumed our chat and were arguing hotly over an undiagnosed pain that tormented him, he claiming it was neuralgia, while I declared for plain old-fashioned toothache, and was casting doubts upon his willingness—Major as he was—to meet the dentist in force the next morning, when Mr. Hanna, glancing at his watch, interrupted with: "Trains—Major—trains!"

He did not hear the warning, but began with mock gravity to explain how much nerve was required to make a man come out from the breastworks and, all empty-handed and unarmed, to face a scientific pain inflictor; and got no further, for a strong arm was flung about his shoulders and a big voice cried: "Boy! that Columbus train won't wait, you know!"

Instantly responding to the affectionate reminder, Mr. McKinley was buttoning his overcoat, diving for gloves into all the pockets where they were not, showing such eager determination to be on time—that a life might have been hanging in the balance. There had been no halting, no—"just one moment"—no hurried finishing of his remarks—but an instant dropping of "chaff" and a swift, whole-souled return to

the business demanding his attention. A small thing, but characteristic, I think.

He offered his hand in farewell, and I remarked: "So you are in the train-catching line, too, Major? That has been my business—lo, these many years!"

As he shook my hand he gave a roguish glance at some brilliants on my fingers and answered: "Well, *you* seem not only to have caught all your trains but a good many other things besides."

He struck his right foot sharply, whirled lightly about on it, and added: "I hope I may be as lucky catching *my* trains!" and laughing brightly back at me he left the room, having had the last jest, and in spite of time honoured precedent the last word—which should of course have been mine.

As general "good-nights" were exchanged, my manager entered to hand me some papers. He knew Mr. Hanna and greeted him, and I heard the kindly though hurried words: "I'm sorry Smith, I haven't time to introduce Major McKinley—we've got to make that Columbus train."

"I'm sorry, too," was the answer, "very sorry, for Mr. McKinley is growing a great man."

Mr. Hanna became motionless—his face set—his eyes had a strained intentness as he looked straight at the other man, and then in a level tone, said: "Wait!" The silence that followed was unbroken, Mr. Hanna passing through the open door—there he paused, turned his grave intent look once more upon us, and repeated: "*Wait!*"

All the world knows now what there was to wait for, but Mr. Hanna seemed to know even then. Shrewd, clear-sighted man that he was, he was taking a long look ahead. But then he knew himself and almost as well he knew the man whom he had that night affectionately called "Boy!" and there was a thrilling prophecy in that terse word: *"Wait!"*

One more glimpse was I to have of the man whose simple goodness rivals his greatness. I was to catch one gleam of that devotion to his gentle wife, that was the perfect flower of man's love for woman, a flower whose perfume to-day sweetly stimulates a nation.

We were again in Columbus. A cheerless, unpleasant evening with a threat of rain in the heavy air and that nerve racking play "Article 47" was on the programme. Worn, weary from a day of neuralgia, I left my dressing-room with nerves and spirits far below concert pitch and only felt a very mild curiosity as to the cause of the gathering of my people in the first entrance, and their efforts to see the occupants of the box opposite. Then I heard one of the local men—a carpenter—saying, rather excitedly: "Yes, that's her—sure as you live! I wonder at it too. It's not a nice night for well people—and Lord! but he is careful of her."

"Whom is he speaking of?" I asked as I glanced across and dimly saw a lady sitting in an armchair, so well in the shadow of the box curtains that all I could distinguish about her was her fine brow and her paleness. But before my question was answered

the Governor came forward and seated himself, and with a pang of regret, I realised that the frail little lady was Mrs. McKinley. Regret that she had been brought to see that most unsuitable play, containing as it did the shooting of a woman and a fearful representation of madness.

The performance began with Mr. McKinley in a front seat, smiling back brightly now and then at his wife, as if sharing with her any bit of fun or cleverness that appeared. Then came the quarrel—the violent threat, and the shooting. Instantly he rose and as I accepted the call before the curtain, I saw him speaking earnestly to her and I was sure he was urging her to retire. But she smiled up at him and kept shaking her head, therefore she was still there when I again appeared, which was not till the third act. As the scene grew ever more threatening, advancing plainly toward a tragedy, Mr. McKinley's interest in it died. *His* interest was centred in the precious little woman in the shadow there. His back went to the stage, his eyes followed the changing expression of her face. Oh, how I hoped someone would persuade her to leave before that last dreadful scene! But, no! As the curtain rose she was still there in her chair; he however had evidently learned of the nature of the final act, for during all the scene of madness he never sat. Standing with his arm circling the top of her chair, his down-bent eyes never left her face for one moment, and when at the sound of the first gibbering laugh several women in front gave startled little cries, he stooped quickly and laid his hand on

hers, though she had made no movement visible to me.

He kept his attitude of watchful protection unbroken to the end. When at last it was all over, he must have been a thankful man. He seized his wife's wrap quickly, but, courteous gentleman that he always was, at the final curtain call he cast it over his arm a moment, to give a few perfunctory hand claps for a performance that, in his anxiety for another, he had not seen.

Another gentleman entered the box just then, and carefully cloaking his wife, Governor McKinley gave her his arm and, the second gentleman walking on her left, they retired from the box. And then I saw a charming—even a moving thing. The audience—a large one, was on its feet, had faced eagerly toward the doors when Governor McKinley appeared supporting his wife and moving slowly. In one instant—without command, without suggestion, but moved by a beautiful impulse, it stood a moment, then, the people having drawn together quickly—clearing a broad passageway right to the centre door—they stood like so many statues of reverence while Governor and Mrs. McKinley made their slow progress out of the theatre. At the door, he turned and waved his hand in acknowledgment of their courtesy; and then only did they begin to chatter and to push and crowd after the true American fashion. It had been an almost involuntary expression of tender sympathy for the woman's delicacy and the man's solicitude, and that moment of the self-effacement of a whole

great crowd of people never returns quickly to my memory without bringing its thrill with it.

And now—and now! this Christian gentleman has been "pushed from his stool" by the hand of a worthless youth! It is strange—it is terrible! That beautiful bond of wedded love is broken and for the first time in all her sheltered, guarded life Ida Saxton McKinley is standing alone. But *standing,* observe. There is race in that woman, and courage and endurance. William McKinley had not shown such reverent loyalty all these years to a weakling. The band was not playing "Hail to the Chief," or "See the Conquering Hero Comes," all through their married life. The wail of the dirge was known to them. Twice she faced death to win for him a higher title than any the world can give, and for herself the crown of motherhood—only to be discrowned at last! Together they faced the sharpest agony that can come to married lovers—the loss of their little ones. Aye, every one was taken from them and their "house left unto them desolate."

Yet there the woman's courage rose. They had taken one another for better, for worse—could anything be worse than that? Exchanging a glance of anguish each was found reflected in the other's tearful eyes, and just so each was enthroned in the other's heart. Each bore up bravely for the other's sake. A courageous woman—she leaned upon her husband, so paying him the sweetest flattery man may ever know. For the weak woman leans upon anyone, but

the strong woman leans only upon the man she honours and most tenderly loves.

So though Mr. McKinley had in him such dogged loyalty that when the pink rose faded on the dear one's cheek, he truly found the white rose fairer and daintier by far. There was much in his wife's character to *win* his admiration, to command respect. That fine brow explains why he confided his business affairs to her. The brightness and sweetness of expression explains why he spent so many evenings at home with her. Their babies gone—they had to be sufficient each for the other. Very surely Mrs. McKinley was companion, friend and counsellor—as well as petted invalid to the noble man God gave her for her true spouse.

She is a brave woman—a God-loving woman; and the "kindly light" that led upward and onward for so many years the steps of her statesman husband, when her tear-blinded eyes can lift themselves from the "dust,"—that "kindly light" steady, tender, beautiful, will lead her on, just step by step, until at last all the world will see the frail, lonely woman, giving beautiful obedience to that last soul-moving behest of the dying Christian husband: "Bear up, Ida—it is God's will!"

Yes, God's will! but oh, true it is: "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform!"

XIV

A CONVERT TO THE PLAY

HIS name was Joel Woodley, and I knew him first at a period of my life where he himself described me as mostly eyes, braids and apron. A square-browed, square-bearded, squarely built man, whose stern silence was but a cloak for unfailing kindness. He was a Christian whose religion was so vital and so strong that it could bear the wear and tear of the six days of labour in addition to the calmer service of the churchly Sabbath.

Never out of his native city, his time was fairly divided between his church, his paper factory and his home. Romance had touched him once, when on his twentieth birthday he had seen for the first time the tall, ruddy, laughing girl who changed the world for him into a place of joy and never failing sunlight. Nearly six years followed of such hard work, such skimping, pinching, saving, that he grew to know the drop of nectar that underlies the bitter draught of self-denial, and if he saw her through roseate glasses then, he had surely never cast them off since with rough, impatient hand.

For the buxom woman at his side, whom he saw with greying hair and telltale wrinkles, tenderly rejuvenated by the rosy light of romantic love, seemed to him all unchanged, the smooth faced, laughing creature of his boyish love. While yet the testing

sorrows, losses, struggles of twenty-five long years spent together had proved her the tenderest, bravest, most loyal of wives, and though beyond a doubt old Joel believed he placed his God first and foremost and far above all earthly treasure or joy, those who knew him well and valued him greatly were convinced that in truth he loved his wife far beyond his hopes of heaven. Be that as it may, he at one time proved that his love for her was greater than his fear of hell—a place of whose actual existence he had no doubt at all.

That Joel Woodley's word was as good as his bond was a belief so firmly established with those whom he dealt with that many of the smaller dealers used to object to ordinary business forms, saying they didn't want any receipts or acknowledgments or signed bits of paper from Joel Woodley, as they reckoned his word was worth all the ink and pens in town.

And he would remark:—"Well, but you see no man knoweth when his call may sound. A sudden passing away often leaves such confusion and uncertainty for others to struggle with that a bit of signed paper becomes very helpful. Better take your proper receipt." And his wise old eyes would smile kindly at them. I was a member of his Sunday-school class, and the pharisaical rattle of my stiff little skirts used to seem to announce that I was not like unto other little girls, who were later, but ever was I first, to arrive, and Mr. Woodley always patted my cheek and said: "That's right; that's right; always be prompt."

His youngest daughter, who was in school parlance "a big girl," lifted me to dizzy heights of pride by noticing me; nay, going to such astounding lengths of condescension as to ask me to her house, where she wrestled laboriously with an ancient and ill-tempered melodeon and with what little breath she had left helped us to sing hymns.

Thus it was that I became an unobserved witness of a struggle between Joel Woodley, man of his word, and Joel Woodley, loving father, and know which Joel won.

He had an only son, a bright, clever lad, but who spent the greater part of his time in getting in and out of trouble. Never a sneak, never untruthful, he was more mischievous than a whole shipload of monkeys, and playing hookey from school was as the wine of life to him. One day his father received a note of complaint from the teacher anent the irregularity of Eddie's attendance, and Mr. Woodley's rare anger was suddenly ablaze. With stern words he denounced the treachery and deceit of such conduct, pointing out to the boy the triple wrong he had done—to teacher, father and himself—when suddenly his own words brought him to a halt. He had just declared that if Eddie ever repeated the offence he would thrash him with his own hands. The boy's amazed face made him shuffle uncomfortably about, but he added—"Well, since I have said it, my boy, I shall surely keep my word—so remember."

Three weeks later, on a very hot day, the murmur and wash of lake water filled Ned's ears and tempted

him to his fall; he ran away to go in swimming, and was found out.

I was at the Woodley house that day, and with the cat sagging in my brief lap sat outside in the back garden and through the veracious pages of a Sunday-school library book I was assisting at the many conversions made by a small Christian at the tender age of five years, when I heard Mr. Woodley usher Ned into the woodshed behind me. His voice sounded queer as he said: "I told you, Eddie, what I should do if you offended again, and I must keep my word. Wait in there for me."

"But, father," said Ned, as all the children called him, "you never hit me before."

"No, and I pray God I may never have to do it again."

"But, father," anxiously continued Ned, "you won't whip me if I promise not to do it again, will you, father?"

"No honest man breaks his word, my boy. So stay in there till I come back."

He passed quite close, but did not see me. At the foot of the garden were some young trees and a few berry canes. Presently he came slowly back with a long green gad in his hand. Before going into the shed he paused and tried a blow or two, and as the tough, strong thing cut through the air with a hiss he shut his eyes and shuddered. Again he put out his hand toward the closed door of the shed, again paused, stood a moment with his head low on his breast. Then he looked cautiously about him, took

in the empty upper windows, and, slowly drawing out his pocket knife, he opened it, closed it, then with desperate haste reopened it and carefully made one, two slits in the side of his rod of punishment.

I, who was singularly well acquainted with various methods of childish punishment, had squirmed at the sight of the slender green strength of the thing, knowing how its flexibility would circle bitingly about small legs. I understood in a flash that Joel Woodley's fatherly heart had failed him, and that he was hedging at the keeping of his word by weakening the gad so that it could bear but few blows without breaking. Oh, stern face and tender heart! He went in then and, with Spartan courage, flogged his erring offspring to the extent of three blows, when the gad strangely split. Still he went on until it broke and Ned blessed his good luck; and the story crept about, and church people, nodding approvingly, told how Brother Joel had worn a green gad to pieces over that handful of his, Eddie.

Now in this man, generally just, generous and godly, there was one single streak of intolerance. To mention the theatre to him was to set him stammering with the force and violence of his wrath, his warning and entreaties. He knew nothing on earth about the theatre save that it was denounced from the pulpit, and that once in his youth he had heard an earnest old burning lake style of preacher boldly declare it to be " the glittering gate of hell," and he had shudderingly accepted this figurative statement as fact capable of proof. To inform him that some young couple of

his acquaintance had been to the play was to give him a painful shock, and he would retreat to the hall and walk restlessly up and down, with hands clasped behind him and down-bent, troubled face. He seemed to think the theatre a place of loose and noisy mirth, where great license of speech was indulged in and, in the language of his beloved Bible, every "superfluity of naughtiness" allowed, including dance music. When people pointed out that such a place as that would repel the refined men and women who found such charm in theatres he instantly declared that in that uncanny charm was the proof positive of the theatre's commerce and close relation with the devil. He would not listen to explanation or description; intractable and stubborn he seemed to be from a great fear.

And then the day came that brought him news of my going upon the stage. "What!" he cried, as he dropped into a chair. "That clear-eyed little girl, with such marked religious leaning, who learned so many verses and was always first in class? Better she had entered a den of wild beasts than that place of sin!" And that night he prayed long and earnestly for my rescue, but in very dejected, hopeless tones. Dear old Joel! I can be but grateful for the good man's prayers, even if he was a trifle doubtful of their efficacy.

The years passed—crowded, busy years. Now and again I met on the street the buxom, smiling Mrs. Woodley, and the daughter who had stooped to me in my days of humiliating youth, and they were

ever genial and hearty in their greetings, but no word was spoken of Joel Woodley, and I felt quite sure he counted me as with the lost.

More time passed, and, after pushing at it long and hard, the wheel of fortune turned for me and, lo! —I was back in the old home city to play a star engagement. As the first Western actress to receive the stamp of Eastern approval, the town felt called upon "to rear up and paw the air," as a certain Alderman put it, and the papers did all that downright goodwill could prompt or devise to make the week memorable. Of course, under all the general excitement, old-time friends grew fairly flighty, and I took pains to send to one elderly lady, who had known me from babyhood, three tickets for Friday night. This Mrs. Bowen was a near neighbour of Mrs. Woodley, and promptly she entered Joel Woodley's domestic Eden and tempted his wife with the forbidden fruit of dramatic entertainment.

"Oh!" cried the tempted one, "and here's the paper announcing that the house is sold out entire for Wednesday and Thursday and only a few seats left for Friday and Saturday. Oh, I must not lose this chance! Clarie was such a nice little girl, there can't be any harm in going to see little Clarie. Mrs. Bowen, you just hold on tight to that ticket for me until I send you word."

Joel Woodley went perfectly white when Ellen, his wife, asked his permission to go to the theatre. When he could speak, he said slowly: "I have never ordered your outgoings or your incomings; you are

free, dear; you must decide the matter for yourself."

But his frightened eyes beseeched her. She looked away, but the sight of the paper lying on the table renewed her longing. She hesitatingly said: "I couldn't go, of course, Joel, if you were to be angry with me."

Very gently he asked: "Have I ever been angry with you, my wife? No. This matter lies between your conscience and yourself, and you alone can decide it. Let us go to dinner, now; Eddie and daughter are waiting."

On Wednesday, moved thereto by the excited story of one who had been to the theatre, Mrs. Woodley suddenly took the bit between her teeth, broke away from all restraining doubts and fears, and bravely announced the intention of going to the play herself on Friday night.

On Friday morning she rose in a state of excited anticipation she had not known since her far-off dancing days. As he was about to leave the house her husband said slowly, painfully: "Ellen, send over to Mrs. Bowen, and see if she has given away that other ticket," and drawing a deep breath he added: "If you will go to that place, my wife, I—why, I must go with you, that's all."

He evidently felt that if he shared in his wife's sad folly he might safely take the onus of their wrongdoing upon himself, and so stand between this woman God had given him and the questioning, condemnatory remarks of the brethren.

That he suffered greatly was plainly seen. I had the story of that night from Mrs. Bowen and Mrs. Woodley both. They said he looked like a condemned unfortunate going to public execution. Once, while in the street car, Mrs. Bowen felt compelled to lay a friendly hand upon his knee and say: "Don't take it so hard, Brother Woodley." But Brother Woodley gave her such a look of accusing woe that, in her own words, "She didn't darst open her lips again."

When in painful silence they reached the theatre, the great arch of gaslight over the door seemed actually to frighten old Joel. However, Ellen led the way and needs must he followed her within "the glittering gates." When they had found their seats the women tried to look cheerful and chat a little as others did—but were painfully conscious all the time of that stony image of disapproval in the aisle seat.

At the crashing bars of the overture, Joel started violently, then shut his eyes and held tight to the end, though his superstitious fears must have tortured him with hideous mental pictures, to bring such drops of perspiration to his pallid face.

Then the curtain rushed up, showing the interior of a tumble-down hut and he was facing the first play of his life, "The New Magdalen." Some officers came and went, then suddenly a great tumult of applause burst forth—it was deafening. He glanced about frowningly. "What's the matter?" he asked. His wife shook her head at him. He looked back at the stage. A woman had come on. She wore a shabby

black gown, a large white apron, and carried over her arm some towels and bandages. Then he caught sight of the badge on her left sleeve. His eyes brightened. He whispered eagerly, "Do you see what she is wearing, Ellen—that's the red cross of Geneva, and she's a good woman, for she's a nurse." But the woman was speaking and her voice acted like a galvanic shock upon the three, the women catching at each other's hands and whispering, "That's Clarie! as sure as you're alive, it's Clarie! Oh, Joel, don't you know her?"

But Joel no longer knew his own name, age, home address, or present situation. Like a whirling golden cloud the fascination of the play had caught him up and carried him beyond and out of himself. He was as the very gods, looking into the hearts and the souls of these people and comprehending their very thoughts. With trembling pity he had watched the temptation, the struggle and the fall of that tired-faced nurse, who, they said, used to be little Clarie. When the curtain had fallen, he sat silent, with hands clenched on his knees, waiting in a sort of daze for the continuation of that story of human life. What he thought, no one knew. He seemed not to heed the music and the applause made him frown and shrink.

At last they reached the closing act of the play. With splendid moral courage, the woman, the sin-stained *Mercy Merrick,* had abandoned her ill-gotten position of security, had made full restitution and was ready to go back, friendless and alone to the poverty and pollution of the nightmare world she had come

from. Yet one last sacrifice was demanded of her—that she tell the dreadful story of her life, simply, truly, to the two men who loved her—one with a selfish, weak and petulant passion, the other with an adoration that had been godlike if less tenderly human.

Thus standing before these two judges, with proud head bowed, there was a moment of dead silence that strained spectators' nerves to the point of pain. The two women with Joel Woodley watched him anxiously. His face was twitching nervously; his hands opening and closing rapidly. Then *Mercy Merrick*, looking back into the murky, dismal past, began her story with her wretched childhood, and presently her low, monotonous voice was saying:

"I was just six years old and I was half dead from starvation." (Joel choked audibly. The voice went on relentlessly.) "A carriage stood near the walk—an old lady sat in it—the rain was falling—the night was coming on—and I begged, openly, loudly, as only a hungry child can beg!"

With a groan Joel Woodley started from his chair, saying decidedly, "I'm going home."

Mrs. Woodley caught him by the hand, whispering, all red-faced, "Joel, sit down." Yet even as he sank back into his chair he remonstrated, "But I can't stand it, dear!" Several hysterical sobs followed the interruption, but not a soul laughed.

When the green curtain fell he rose with the rest and passed his hand several times over his eyes and brow, as one waking from sleep. In tones of great

satisfaction Mrs. Woodley called his attention to a party leaving one of the boxes. "Is not that the Mayor and his family?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered, and then began to look about, noting the shape and furnishings of the auditorium. Presently he expressed a naïve wonder at the quality of the people present, and then a great stillness fell on him till they had left the crowded car and were slowly walking through the midnight silence of their quiet street of homes.

The women had murmured an appointment to talk it all over the next day. Joel, lifting his face to the starry heavens, muttered: "Thy arrows are very sharp," and a little further on, again and in a most contrite voice, ("For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased.") Then, as they neared her home, he said, "Sister Bowen, I have to thank you for helping to teach me a lesson to-night. I have been listening to sermons since my boyhood, but that play is the greatest sermon I have ever heard; with more power to convict of sin, to move to pity and repentance."

Two astonished women stood and stared. Then Mrs. Bowen, in mild deprecation, ventured with, "Well, perhaps, all plays are not such beneficial teachers as this one, and maybe some actors are of a lower degree than those we saw to-night." But Joel only smiled a little, while saying, "No doubt, no doubt; but I have presumed to judge and condemn a body of people of whom I knew nothing. I was wrong. Good night, Sister Bowen."

As husband and wife walked slowly onward she at

last ventured rather timidly, "What did you think of little Clarie, Joel?"

He smiled "It's very good of you, Ellen, not to remind me of how I have long counted her with the utterly lost. She had me on the rack to-night. Why, it seemed to me that all the sorrow of all the sinning women in the world was pleading through her voice and weeping through her eyes. She may be doing the very work she was created for—I'll judge no more." And silently they entered their quiet dwelling place.

Dear old Joel! The last time I looked upon his kindly face the footlights, like a crescent of fire, blazed between us, and there were pitying tears upon his cheeks, but though I saw him no more I received a message of his own writing that only reached me after his most Christian departure upon that last journey he looked to find not long, but brief as the winking of the human eye.

. . . . . .

"Come with me to the old home for at least a few minutes"—but time was precious and I hesitated. "Please, there is something there for you."

Her brave eyes were misty; I knew she was referring to Joel—so I went with her. And standing before the polished shell of the sulky old melodeon I seemed to see through the dimness the serious face of Mr. Woodley, the romping Ned, the sedate Ella, and also the childish visitor of long braids and white apron.

I listened to the fond foolish stories of school triumphs, of family happenings, of mischievous

pranks discovered—all told and heard with that tremulous, uncertain laughter that is but a transparent screen for tears; and then I found myself standing before a small table in the bright, sunny place she still called " our room " in memory of a blessed companionship of years.

She laid her hand upon my arm and said: " I'm quite certain you never bore a grudge to Joel for the bitterness of his speech against your profession when he spoke in blackest ignorance. Oh, I know, my dear, and I know, too, that you used to be right fond of him in your little girl days; and just because of that I want you to know how sincere he was. I want you to see this because it will bear witness for him."

She gently drew aside a silken covering and said: " That's Joel's own Bible, Clarie; open it, please."

There was a certain pathetic dignity about the worn and faded book, and seeing me hesitate, Mrs. Woodley put out her hand and opened it, and in a moment her words were proved true.

There was nothing stiff and niggardly in the opening of the volume. Turn to any part and the pages opened widely, completely, with a kind of welcome to their contents, a habit of old, much handled books. The yellowing leaves were so worn and thin at their lower corners that the use of a kind of spatula, made of thick writing paper, was necessary to turn them with safety.

" Look! Do you see those marks on the margin of the leaves? They were made by Joel's thumb-nail, and these nail-marked passages were so luminous to

me that they explained his state of mind perfectly. See here, dear, was where he read and read and re-read the night we had been to the theatre. He left the book open and I looked at the page, and I found this deep, short thumb-mark. Read the lines he scored."

It was at the tenth chapter of St. John, where Jesus declares himself the "Good Shepherd," and the heavily scored words were: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."

"You can follow his thought,—his self-reproachful thought,—can you not, dear?"

I nodded, and aimlessly pushed back and forth a bit of folded paper lying there. "That's for you, Clarie—Joel wrote that for you. I've been keeping it for you ever since." Written in lead pencil, it said:

"Dear Little Clarie—that used to be: You were always a clever little girl. I taught you many lessons in the past. Last night you taught me just one, but it has made me a convert to the play. Your friend,

"JOEL WOODLEY."

XV

A CHIP OF THE OLD CONFEDERACY: JUBAL A. EARLY

I WAS too young to really understand the great war when it was on. I had no father and no brother to explain matters to me, so my ideas on the subject of the mighty struggle were—well, peculiar, at least. I was greatly lacking in bitterness of spirit, and I remember that on one occasion when I had been sent at risk of sunstroke to read what was written on the bulletin board at the telegraph office, as I pushed through the crowd, I wept, because the killed on both sides were all Americans. Why—I indignantly asked—if these secession people and our abolition people must fight, why don't they turn around and fight some foreign people, and not be Caining and Abeling each other like this? I had then, as I have now, the habit of forming strong likes or dislikes for people unknown to me; therefore, Grant, Sheridan, Sherman, Custer, Hancock and Meade I greatly admired, while Burnside—whom, like several others named, I came to know later in life—I disliked because of his whiskers, which would not let him look like a fighting man. And in spite of all I read of the wonderful executive and constructive ability of McClellan, I always saw him in my imagination very spick and span, correct and superior in air, drawing,

on nice, white paper, plans of battles to be fought when all his soldiers were quite perfectly trained and correctly uniformed; and I used to wonder anxiously if the enemy would wait until he was quite ready. On the other side, I greatly admired J. E. B. Stuart. Robert E. Lee I thought quite lovely, but, for some mysterious reason, I always regarded him as a martyr, and was grateful that his people loved him so. In my opinion, the best thing about Jefferson Davis was his wife. I had never seen him pictured without her, and she was charming. Morgan and Forrest, I was afraid of; but the man I disliked, without rhyme or reason, but yet wholly, entirely disliked, was Jubal A. Early.

As the years went on, I developed an undying curiosity about the war and everyone who took part in it—high or low, old or young, black or white, Federal or Confederate—all were marvels of interest to me if they had been in the great fight. I was utterly speechless with emotion when I took, in farewell, the proffered hand of that beautiful wreck, Pauline Cushman, who left the stage to act as a spy in the Northern service, while my heart almost stood still with the wonder and the marvel of the glimpse I caught of a boy, small, pallid and just then wearily indifferent, but yet a morsel blown across my path from one of the bloodiest battlefields of the world—Shiloh. His legs had gone from under him. When his breath returned, he called aloud to space: "My drum ain't busted, but I can't reach t'other stick!" and then rat-tatted as best he could, sitting, hot in his own blood, there in what might have seemed the

measured centre of the surely coming charge. As his one stick beat, rataplanning as best it might alone, his ghastly face, turned backward, saw the first man, rifle in hand who topped the low ridge, racing forward on two strong legs, furiously cursing the swinging, helpless left arm that dripped as he ran. And the child, with frenzy-keyed, shrill voice, screamed: "Man! Man! Give me my stick! I ain't got no legs! Oh, give me my stick, will you? And, say! Put me by that tree, and I'll drum all day—I will!"

Without pause the man with the sound legs cast from him the useless gun, caught up the boy, and swung him, drum and all, to his shoulder. He snatched up the second stick, brought the shattered little legs about his neck, and, holding them on his breast with his sound arm, he leaped forward, barely escaping submersion by the great blue wave, now pouring over the ridge. A wild roar of recognition followed in the wake of the long roll and rattle torn from the drum by the childish hands of the man-mounted drummer-boy, while he madly beat out rally, charge, everything he could think of save a recall.

Then the gasping man who carried him began to reel in his tracks, and the drummer-boy cried, piercingly:

"Oh, Man! Man! Don't put me down! See—they're dropping like flies—and they want me to drum to show 'em the way to go! Don't, damn it, don't! Oh, God!"

For, with a roar, the earth, the good, old patient earth, was hurling itself skyward, rent apart to its

awful, flaming heart, and the boy's legs were gone again!

Then, if the mere sight of this maimed little drummer-boy so affected me, imagine how interesting I must have found the men who were powers during those four slow, dragging, bloody years of war. But the great struggle had been over for long years when, in playing a two-weeks' engagement in the city of New Orleans, I met that true chip of the old Confederacy—General Jubal A. Early.

The glory of the old St. Charles Hotel having departed, and the new hotel being still on paper only, I followed the example set by others of my profession, and took apartments in a private house. I soon found there was another guest there, whose room was on the ground floor, and from my balcony I often saw him coming in or going out, and my attention was at once attracted by his odd appearance.

He was bowed and bent at the shoulders, and seemed greatly to need the support of his massive old cane. His hair and long straggly beard were of that yellowish white that is the least lovely of all the shades of grey hair, but his costume was the oddest thing about him. Sunday or week-day, he was clothed from top to toe in a peculiar shade of grey, quite unlike anything I had ever seen in tailoring-goods before, the trousers, vest, tailed coat and big hat being all of that unusual grey.

Susie, a woman who had been in service there so long that she had taken her employer's name, being in my room one day as the old man left the house, I

commented to her on his odd appearance, ending with: "I wonder, sometimes, if that is not the prison-made grey cloth formerly used by the Confederate army? Give a military cut, a little black braid, a few brass buttons to that coat, and I almost believe we'd have a true Southern uniform."

And Susie answered: "I reckon, Miss, you don't know who dat ol' man is, or you'd be mighty sure of what cloth he's dressed in. Why, dat's ol' Mr. Early?"

I turned quickly: "You don't mean the General—Jubal A. Early?"

"Yaas, ma'am, dat's jes' who I do mean. He lives here, locked up in his own room, an'—my Lordy!—how he does damn and hate all you Northern people!"

She looked at me expectantly "I reckon you Northerners plumb hate him back again?"

"Good gracious, no!" I answered, "People of the North are good fighters, but bad sulkers. They are too busy attending to their business to waste time hating people, even those who have been of real consequence."

I saw the malicious sparkle in the woman's eyes, but I never dreamed she was going to avenge an undeserved "blowing-up" by repeating my words to the General, as she did that very night. She told me of the lonely life of the old soldier, of his oddities, of his profanity with the people, and, finally, of his one, his only, joke. Whenever he went away to a soldier's reunion or funeral or the like, he always

gave his key into Susie's own hand, forbidding her, on pain of death, to allow any "damned body" in his room—Mrs. T. no more than anyone else. Then he would tramp to the front door, pause, beckon her to him, and say, fiercely: "Look here! If they put any damn' Northerner in my room, Susie—you kill him, do you hear? P'izen him, and leave the consequences to *me!* I'll see you through and stand the expenses of burying him besides, damn him!"

And that was the joke, well worn, the one and only joke of General Early, so far as this family knew, and he had lived long with them. He was very grumpy and gruff in manner. When he chanced to meet strangers in the hallway, he even muttered a curse, as he unlocked his door, if the intruder was masculine; while my silent bow, as I passed him, produced but a spasmodic upward jerk of the gnarled forefinger toward the grey, unlifted hat. And I smiled as I realised that the old, childish dislike for the man, unreasoning as ever, was still with me, because, perhaps, all trace of the West-Pointer, of the veteran soldier, had slipped away from him, in his appearance there being more of the lawyer, more of the embittered politician, than of the army man.

Slipping out one day to match a skein or two of embroidery silk, I found, on leaving the store, that I was threatened with a drenching, and ran for home, scudding before the gale with bare poles. Mercy! What wind! What darkness! I was dashed up the three shallow steps, and, as I seized hold of the door-

knob, I laughed: "Any port in a storm," and fairly hurled the door back, and myself into the hall. And, oh, dear! Oh, dear! A big cane went flying one way, and a man who had had a hand upon the knob went the other way and struck the wall with a violence that forced an Indian-like "ugh!" from his lungs as the door banged to.

"I beg your pardon! Oh! I beg your pardon!" I gasped.

"Wh-what the devil's the matter with you?" snorted the unfortunate.

"*That's* what's the matter with me!" I cried, as through the shrieking wind we heard the first lashing of the furious rain across the door. I ran, and picked up the cane, and placed it in his heavily veined hand.

"I'm so sorry, sir," I continued; "of course, I could not know anyone was holding the other knob. It was the storm that made me so frantic to get in, and I'm dreadfully afraid I've hurt you badly, although I suppose you'd rather die there against the wall than acknowledge an injury received from a Northerner?"

Something like a grim smile came to his lips, as he grunted: "Well, you're no fool, if you have mashed me up here like a mosquito against the wall. What a devil of a noise!" he grumbled, as he drew his door-key from his pocket. I saw how his hand trembled, and boldly taking the key from him, I said:

"Please let me assist you, sir," and ran down the hall, and unlocked the door.

"This is my room and home," he said, then paused and peered in and exclaimed: "Now, damn that woman!"

Oh, such a dreary, forbidding room, in that dim light! Such a dust, confusion of papers and books, uncomfortable chairs, coverless tables, undraped windows! His frown had deepened, and, in a querulous tone of real disappointment, he said, more to himself than to me: "Now, where in the devil is my lunch?"

Then—in spite of all I had heard of his woman-hating, of his unsociability—the utter forlornness of that room, the beating storm outside, made me bold, and I answered: "I don't know where your luncheon is, General, but I do know where mine is, and you're going to share it with me, unless you're afraid I'll poison you?" He shot a quick glance at me, but I went on. "You look like a tea-drinker." He nodded emphatically. "Then, come on," I said, "and take your tea with the enemy."

"Oh!" I gasped, as the house fairly shook. "I'm afraid of the storm! Please come and lunch with me, won't you?" At this he laughed outright, locked his door securely, again punctiliously damned Susie, and followed me upstairs.

My sitting-room's pictures, piano and couches, glorified with roses and mignonette, and made hospitable by warm, doggish welcome, seemed, by contrast with that dusty desolation downstairs, a homely and inviting spot. The tray was already on the small table, but, requiring some additions to its furnishings,

I rang the bell in a darkness so great that I had to feel for the button. The general proposed a light.

"The matches are right beside you, sir," I announced, "on the mantel." I felt trouble in the air as I spoke, and he put his cane under his arm, and grabbed the little fancy receptacle. The sandpapered space was about an inch and a half long. He drew out a match, and, jerking it across the sand-paper, sent the flaming head flying through the air. One match went that way in silence, a second went with a stamp of the foot, a third with a snort, a fourth with a damn! And then he dashed the box on the mantel, snatched out another match, and, scratching it across that part of his anatomy most suited for the service, he had the gas lighted in an instant, and was telling me just what kind of fool the man was who had invented that particular match-safe.

Then the recalcitrant Susie appeared and saw who my companion was, standing on the threshold in an amazement that became stupefaction when she heard my order.

"What's the matter with you, you chucklehead?" grimly inquired the old man.

"W-w-why, General, you goin' to break bread with er Northern woman? W-w-why you've cuss'd 'em from Dan ter Beersheba ever since de war! You is plumb hoodoo'd, you is, Marse Early!"

"If I had my bootjack here!" regretfully murmured "Marse Early." At those words Susie began to take proper notice, and started away to get the cup, plate, et cetera, and I jestingly added: "Be sure you

bring a separate pot for General Early's tea. I want him to feel quite safe from—er—attack of any sort, you know."

I laughed as I threw off my hat and mantle, and he answered: "That's just like you Northerners. Rub it in—rub it in! Well, I see that that fool Susie's been telling tales about me, and you are just what your infernal soldiers were, you love to rub it in. It's a cursed mean trait, too!"

"I know it. I know it!" I replied, as I held out my hand for his hat and cane, and pushed a chair toward him. "It showed itself most plainly in our fierce and implacable Grant at Appomattox. You remember how he 'rubbed it in' about the side-arms, the horses and the self-respect he left to the brave men who had gamely lost to him! You would not have rubbed it in like that, would you, General?"

He gazed angrily at me with his bright, hot-looking, dark eyes, and a fierce blast of noise from outside suddenly reminded me that, although the war was over, the storm was not, and, hastily pulling a big white rose from the bowl, I waved it before him, crying:

"Truce, General, truce! If you have been too busy all your life to learn to take a joke, you can't have passed through the Florida, Mexican and Civil ructions without learning how to carve a chicken!" And I offered him the carving-knife and fork.

He accepted them, remarking: "You're a mocking, little Northern devil! But I'll carve the chicken for you."

And I added: "That's right, and we won't say anything more about poisoning Northerners, or rubbing things into Southerners, but, like little birdies in a nest, we'll pick the worms that Susie brings."

At which nonsense he broke into crackling laughter, and then entered said Susie, with teapot, dishes, etcetera. Presently, she being gone, behold us vis-à-vis, outside the lashing storm, between us the neatly arranged tray and steaming silver pot; beside me, cushion-enthroned, the small empress of my heart, Lasca, who ate every currant and raisin an unwilling cake gave up.

The General drank his cup of tea eagerly, as one who needed the refreshment. Then, in true tea-lover fashion, he took the second one reflectively, with appreciation of flavour and bouquet.

He had partaken rather sparingly of the cold fowl and salad, and sat stirring the tea slowly in his cup, when I heard the welcome words: "Yes, I remember once, when we——" and I knew that he was off for a talk. Believing that he would go on as long as the tea lasted, I gently, gently drew the hot-water pitcher nearer and secretly refilled my cup from that; for I was certain that once the thread of reminiscence was broken, even by an order for fresh tea, he would take it up no more. So I sipped water, and listened, asking a question now and then, seizing a moment of excitement or a quiet unconscious explosion of swearing, to pour a little tea into his cup, that and sympathetic listening being the fuel that kept him going.

And so he told me many things about the great war, and, as he talked, a curious change came over him; and suddenly I was reminded of that queer growth sometimes sold by pedlers on the street, and called the "Jerusalem rose." A dry, drab bunch of stems, it looks as dead as Herod, but, placed in a basin of water, it softens, uncurls, spreads out sturdy roots, and presently becomes green as to leaf, a sort of hemlocky or cedar-like green, but nevertheless fresh and living. And here was this bent man straightening up, throwing back his head and shoulders, the growling, grumpy tones becoming more open, more commanding. His always bright eyes were now hotly glowing, and something of the soldier came back to his bearing. Only the bitterness of the disappointed man remained unchanged, and its tang was in every sentence that he spoke. If he sneered contemptuously at the great men of the North, he was savagely critical of some of the great men of the South. He cursed venomously when speaking of "Fisher's Hill" and of Sheridan, but Custer's name he would not pronounce, not even when he referred to "Waynesboro," where he lost to the younger man, and, a few sad days later, found himself "relieved of his command."

A silence had come upon him, after the speaking of those bitter words, "relieved of my command." He stared downward—oh, if I could have seen in that cup all that *he* saw there, as he stirred the tea round and round, while his heavily veined left hand nervously threaded his beard!

I did not know just what to say or do—somehow I always seem to know when suffering is near. I felt its presence then, and, meaning to break the silence with some casual remark, I made this criminal selection: "Waynesboro? That was in the spring of '64, I think?"

His fierce eyes leaped at my face, as a hound might have leapt at my throat, as he shot out the words: "March—'65!" From knitted brows to writhing mouth there was such a quiver of pain upon his face that instead of this hated date he might have plucked a knife from his living breast. Only a moment's open expression, but in it there was so much wounded pride, anger, humiliation and pain, that suddenly I seemed to partly understand his bitterness, in looking back at the long road he had travelled from West Point, through the Florida War, through the honours of the Mexican War, through the early successes of the Civil War, only to find military extinction at Waynesboro!

"Relieved of his command" after nearly thirty years of service! Staring into his cup again, he looked so old, so sad, so lonely, a swift impulse made me cry: "The greatest soldier of his time came at last to Waterloo!" and, as I live, he half rose from his chair, and, bowing to me, said gravely: "Thank you, madam!"

As he sank back, he began rolling a strand of his beard between his thumb and forefinger. "You have a kind heart," he said, "a big heart." He paused, then with impetuosity he exclaimed: "See here! I'd

like you to understand things better. You—you damned Northerners think it's mighty funny that our niggers fear the power of the 'voodoo,' or, as you-all call it, the 'hoodoo.' A power for evil—a power stronger than you are. Away from the blacks, it is bad luck. You don't believe in it, but you'll nail a cursed old horseshoe over your door to keep it away, and none of you dare walk under a ladder, for fear of this bad luck! But look you here, young lady. Sometimes in this world it comes about that, instead of the nigger, it's the white man who plumb fears his cursed luck! It is the white man, who, in secret to his quaking soul, acknowledges the power of some 'hoodoo!' Why, see here! Was I not a soldier trained, a seasoned and experienced soldier, an honest man, and devoted body and soul to the 'Cause?' I served it successfully, too, at the first. I was at——" And he rapidly pronounced the names of many battle-fields. "A 'division' is not given to a man who is a coward or a fool, and *then* did I change? Never, in the world! I, old Jubal Early, was as keen to plan, as eager to work and as ready to turn up my toes, as any man in the Confederacy! I did not change, but, by the Almighty! my luck changed with a vengeance! On foot or on horseback, in camp or in field, bad luck dogged my steps. No matter how perfect my plans might be, how thoroughly approved by others, bad luck followed any attempt of mine to carry them through. Half-won engagements suddenly lost, victory torn from your very grasp, would make any man believe in bad luck. My reputation

as a 'Jonah' began to spread far and wide. Why, a wounded, jeering devil of a prisoner said one day: 'Oh, we knew we were going to lick you that time.'

"'How could you know?' asked the Confederate with whom he was talking. 'You were devilishly near to being licked yourselves!'

"'That's so,' replied the prisoner, 'but, all the same, when we heard that that unlucky old man Early was in command, we *knew* we'd win—couldn't help it, you know!'"

The General raised his piercing old eyes with almost an appeal in them, as he continued: "And, in God's name, was there ever such luck heard of as that which, at the eleventh hour, brought Sheridan on the field, sweeping together, as he rode, his whipped and fleeing men, with his cursed call: 'Face the other way, boys! Face the other way!' and so wrenching away from us our hard-won victory?"

He shook his head, sighing heavily, then he slowly went on: "Opequan Creek. Fisher's Hill. Cedar Creek. Lost guns. Lost trains. Hard luck! Hard luck! But," he cried, fiercely, "by God, no cowardice!" adding, "Eh? Eh?" in a tone of challenge.

And I answered: "General, I fancy you are the only person in the South who would venture to couple the name of Early with the word 'cowardice.'"

In spite of the oaths and jibes and sneers at Northerners he had indulged in, I was feeling very sorry for this disappointed old soldier in his loneliness, when suddenly he exclaimed: "What the devil's the

reason the vain, stiff-necked, narrow-minded women of the North have no hearts? For you are only an exception, going to prove the rule. You Northerners are——"

A swift anger flared up in me, and I—Oh, shame to me!—(and, just see, now, how quickly "evil communications corrupt good manners") I struck the tray a blow that made my fingers tingle, as I cried, violently: "What the deuce do *you* mean, General Early, by attacking the people you know nothing about? The women of the North—the women of the North! I don't believe you ever met a lady from north of your air-drawn Mason and Dixon's Line! I don't believe you ever came nearer to a Northern woman than some poor God-forgetting harpy of a camp-follower! Oh, you know the class well; you had plenty of them in the South who followed the army in grey, hovering like vultures upon the flanks of your own hungry troops! Creatures who had forgotten girlhood—wifehood—almost their womanhood! How would you like it if I judged the women of the South by such creatures? Make the acquaintance of a few Northern women—if they will receive you—before you venture to criticise them again!"

I can see yet the utter astonishment upon his face, as, drawing a long breath, he slowly said: "Well, I'm damned!"

"You will be," I laughed, "if you go on sneering at your own countrywomen. But I have faith to believe you would not stand quietly by and permit a foreigner to speak so of them?"

"No, not by a long shot!" he quickly answered, and just then a watery sunlight that yet paled the gas came into the room, and he sent a surprised glance clockward and hastily rose: "I—I—why, what have I been about!" he exclaimed, confusedly.

"You have been giving me a great pleasure, General Early," I replied.

"Humph! Then you must have some damned original ideas on happiness in general."

I laughed—he swore, but he didn't look at all alarming.

"The worst of it is," he added, "I've done all the talking. I've dragged you clear from Chambersburg to Waynesboro; and I can't lay the blame of the gossip on you. To talk like that to a Northerner, when I do just p'izen-hate the North, and all——"

"Forgive me, General, but I don't believe you. No—I say no! You *can't* hate one part of your country—you can't. Remember that you loved, followed and served a flag with a whole fieldful of stars long years before you tried to tear out from it a single star to follow and serve. And now that all are back again—the field full once more—you are glad of it! Oh, don't tell me—I know that, down in your heart, it's the whole flag, as it's the whole country, that you love! And this 'Cause' that is lost—what was it but a magnificently awful mistake, paid for by tens of thousands of American lives freely given for ideal right—sanctified by uncounted broken hearts? But, the 'Cause' being lost, it should be treated as are the beloved dead, laid at rest forever. Remem-

bered? Yes, tenderly, regretfully, but silently! Oh, General, I am taking my turn at the talking, now. But one word more, and I'll let you off. If only some foreign power would shake a threatening fist against our flag, how quickly your old soldier-heart would prove to you that you love your country, in its entirety!"

He shook his head. "You have a sharp tongue," he remarked, but not roughly, as he stooped to pick up his cane.

I begged his pardon, and, taking his hat, paused in handing it, to ask: "Why do you do this, General?"

He touched his ugly coat. "This?" he inquired, with a half-smile.

"Yes," I answered. "It's not its artistic charm that wins your fidelity. Do you wear your Confederate-grey clothing just to be, as children say, 'aggravating'?"

He frowned quickly. I went on. "Or do you wear it as sometimes a widow wears black all her life long, in true mourning for her lost one?"

He struck his hat into shape—beneath his beard his lips twitched nervously.

"I wear it—in memory—of—of *many things*," he said, and there was indescribable bitterness in the last two words.

"Forgive me," I said. He pressed my hand silently, and Susie entered and gazed with goggle-eyes at the clock.

"Well, chucklehead," he snapped, "did you ex-

pect to find me dead, that you are so disappointed to see me living?"

"Good Lordy!" grinned Susie.

"You are just in time to escort General Early to his room," I laughed, "and I call on you to witness that he leaves this door as sound and as whole as when he entered."

"Here!" he said, "take this key and open my door, and put some water on the table." He was following Susie down the hall as he spoke. "And if you have any sense, you'll put my bootjack out of reach, for you've been telling tales behind my back, you useless piece of lumber!" Suddenly he turned, and said to me:

"Thank you, for your kindly hospitality!"

"A large word to express a mere cup of tea," I answered.

"I have received more than a cup of tea. You fed me, you listened to me, and, by the Almighty, you gave me a pretty sharp lesson about the Northern women, but——" He passed hat and stick to his left hand, straightened up, brought his heels together, and honoured me with a salute most soldierly, as he grimly added: "But I reckon I needed all I got. Good afternoon!" And he marched downstairs.

He left the city for a reunion before I did. As he gave his key into Susie's hand, he said: "If they put any damn' Northerner in my room, Susie, you kill him! Do you hear? P'izen him, and leave the consequences to me. I'll see you through, and pay the expenses of burying him beside, damn him! Good-

bye! Oh, I say—hold on a minute, Susie—if they put any Northerner in my room except that infernal little vixen upstairs, do 'em up! But you can let *her* slide. Good-bye!"

Thus did he modify his joke for my sake—this devoted, disappointed chip of the old Confederacy.

XVI

A HUNT FOR A PLAY

I HAD been successfully starring for several seasons in the same plays I had started with, and feeling that the patience of my patrons deserved some reward, I determined to offer them a new play for their entertainment—a thing, alas, that was easier to decide upon than actually to do, for, in theatrical parlance, it was hard to "fit" me, to suit the public. Personally, I had always a marked preference for even, well-balanced, good general work—the perfection of the whole cast giving me more pleasure than the most brilliant individual effort made in a star play, where the natural movement and action, the proper development of other characters are sometimes sacrificed for the enlargement and the glorification of the star's part—a custom in practice up to the period of Monsieur Rostand's great vogue in America, when his "Cyrano de Bergerac" received a second production in New York, and to the stupefaction of the literary and artistic world, many of the hero's noblest lines, his strongest speeches came from the lips of *Cynthia*. It was inartistic, absurd, but the lady was the star and the manager knew that the public expected much from a favourite; the part was not very prominent and he took drastic measures to make it so.

You see, the public does not value general excel-

lence so highly as individual effort on the part of the man or woman who is their favourite star. Again, if there is the slightest touch of the peculiar, the unusual, about an actor or an actress—if one chances to be a brilliant fencer, or has an exceptionally gurgling, mellow laugh, or sheds real tears in harrowing situations—never, never will that unhappy star quite satisfy the public in a play that does not demand a fight, much laughter, or a flood of tears. All this I knew when I began looking for that new play on this side of the water, while any and every friend I had on the other side searched diligently through English and French haystacks for a dramatic needle suited to my use. But, alas, I was known as a strong actress, and also as a shedder of tears, and had mighty Will, himself, risen from the grave to offer me a play without tears then would the people have said: "Yes, it's very fine, but she does not make us cry. Give us the old plays, where we can surely weep for four out of five acts."

At last I heard of "La Martyre," in Paris—a daughter's self-sacrifice to save a beloved mother, whose youthful sin is about to find her out. Ah! that looked promisingly teary, but the *Jezebels*, the *Coras*, the *Miss Multons* had made the public expect strong scenes. Were they forthcoming, I wondered? Finally learning that there was a shooting in my presence, a dismissal from home and child, and a piteous plea for permission to meet the daughter secretly at the grandparents' home, I determined to risk all, and announced that I would produce the play in San Fran-

cisco, calling it, at my manager's advice, " Renée de Moray "—the name of the heroine.

I had my gowns made in New York and to my great regret had to proceed on my journey westward before the play's production in New York, where it was in preparation, with one of those amazingly fine casts that Mr. Palmer was noted for. Watching eagerly for its *première,* imagine my crushed stupefaction when it failed. There was no mincing of matters, no ifs or buts. Beautiful scenery, perfect costuming, people specially engaged for some of the characters, careful rehearsing—all had gone for nothing!

The improbability of this play—which was great, be it admitted—alone impressed the audience. I was aghast! What, I asked myself, could I do in the way of a production to compare with Mr. Palmer's effort? Then I began to hunt for the cause of the failure. I studied the story of the play carefully. The weak point was quickly found. Many a daughter would sacrifice herself to save a beloved mother (the mother remaining unconscious of the service), but when that daughter is happily married, is herself the proud mother of a girl-child; when the assuming of the elder woman's sin means the breaking up of home and the dishonouring of worshipped husband and child—why that is unnatural, if one stops to think. Ah! I repeated the words, " If one stops to think! " Probably that was what had killed the play. The actors were too calm, too collected—they gave the house time to think, to discover the improbability of

a woman making such a martyr of herself. Only the headlong impetuosity of a sentimental and intensely affectionate temperament, an utter abandonment to her emotions, done with absolute sincerity, could sweep an audience on a great wave of sympathy high into that region where reason is for a time lost in excitement and emotion. Then I looked eagerly at the cast and saw that for *Renée* Mr. Palmer had engaged one of the finest high-comedy women on the stage, but who was noted for her coldness in emotional characters. My faith in the play began to revive. Still I offered to recall its announcement if the California management desired me to. The gist of their answer was " that I might withdraw the play if I was afraid of it."

There they had stepped on the tail of my coat—pugilism was in the air at that time. I forgot my good manners and answered that I " never threw my hat into the ring unless I intended to follow it in person," an expression that brought joy to the hearts of the " powers that were," and they answered: " ' Renée de Moray ' announced for second week and we're betting on you."

Thus, with that dreadful anxiety, that to be or not to be a success, ever in my mind and making of me a *vraie martyre,* I took *Renée* by the hand, and turning our backs upon Chicago we faced westward toward the Great Divide, the rolling prairies, the stultefying deserts, the irritating snow-sheds, the glorious Sierras and the downward swoop to the great City of the Coast, where hand-in-hand we would face our public

and try to stampede it into such a rush of sympathy that logic should be forgotten—until next day.

Later on I made the trip to California in a private car, thereby enjoying all the privacy and most of the comforts of home life while travelling, but it certainly was a bit monotonous compared to this journey, which proved one of the liveliest on record. As I was just recovering from an attack of single-pneumonia, my husband was anxious to establish me comfortably in my stateroom before the starting of the train. Having done so, he and the maid had no sooner left me to attend to checking and some small last matters than a great hubbub arose at my very door. The conductor, with patient self-control, was receiving the hysterical attack of one of those wealthy, boastful American women whom I had been meeting for years in foreign novels, but had never, never encountered in real life before. She was the wife, she declared of Mr. Great-man, who was a millionaire more times than the conductor had fingers and thumbs. She had in her own right more money than he had ever dreamed of. She demanded that that stateroom be cleared out at once, that her maid might arrange it for occupancy! Did he suppose that *she* was going to sleep in a section-berth like a common person? She, who could pay three times the usual price, and by right of her position and her husband's power the room was hers! Where was his authority for favouring this nobody at the cost of her convenience? Higher and higher arose the nasal tones, angrily she repulsed someone who tried to

calm her! Greatly distressed, I arose from the sofa and, opening the door, anxiously asked the conductor if I was unconsciously encroaching on another's rights?

"Not at all," he replied. "Your room was engaged more than forty-eight hours before this lady asked for it. She can secure staterooms clear through to 'Frisco by waiting until to-morrow," and very gently he pushed me back toward my pillowed nest on the sofa. And just then, as the excited lady stamped her foot and ordered me to withdraw at once, a messenger ran alongside the train calling! "Clara Morris! Is Clara Morris in this car?"

"Oh!" exclaimed Madam Millions, grasping the wrist of her companion, "oh, is she on board? How lovely! We must get a good look at her!"

And then the conductor called out: "This way—here she is!" and handed the message to me. There came a sound like the sudden squawk of a startled hen, then a gasping cry: "Salts!" One single inhalation followed, and in that instant of time she had shifted her position—had turned her coat. With quivering voice she commanded her companion to "follow that conductor, get his number and his name. I know he doesn't go clear through, but he shall be punished all the same, as he deserves to be, placing me in a false position, deceiving me into a seeming insult to one I admire and honour! Oh, my husband will see that he suffers!" She broke from her friends; she pushed into my room to ask "if I ever knew of such malice as that man had shown—hiding my name

from her, and leading her on by false statements to make unkind suggestions of removal? But," she closed, "I am a very wealthy woman, Miss Morris, and he shall suffer for causing you such needless annoyance. Let me cover you up—don't you want my salts?" etc., etc., and that was the beginning of the journey.

Next, I was told that one of the star criminals of the great West—the unwilling guest of a too zealous sheriff—had been ushered into our car, causing a great flutter there; and I rose from my sofa and, drawing aside the door-curtain, stood swaying back and forth while I tried to peep at the wrongdoer who had been taken in the toils and was on his way now to an undoubted life sentence. But look as I would I could not find the prisoner. In one man I saw the ideal Western sheriff, but there was a fair-haired young chap beside him who would not fill the bill at all. At last I walked out to the end of the car, ostensibly looking for my husband; on my way back I met the conductor and a little girl, and we stood chatting a moment. I was wearing a rather peculiar bracelet, formed as a horseshoe, the open space being filled with a horse's bit. The conductor declared it a perfect design for a man's bracelet, at which the little girl was contemptuous over the idea of a man wearing such a thing.

"Oh!" I laughed, "the first gentleman of England wears one!" and then a clear, well-modulated voice beside me added: "Oh, yes, sissy, and Tum-Tum is not the only man to wear a bracelet by a long

shot. Why, we wear them over here sometimes, only the devil of it is they are made double here!"

I glanced at the speaker. He was the fair-haired chap, and he wore the shameful bracelets of the criminal. There's something revolting in the sight of a manacled human being, and the surprise turned me very white, I know, for he leaned forward and said quickly: "I beg your pardon. I thought everybody knew." And I stammered stupidly, "Pardon *me!*" and hastened back to my room, thoroughly ashamed that I had yielded to such curiosity.

The time passed slowly. The horse thief and forger outside was behaving well—no trouble at all—but he was bored to extinction, and so was everyone else for that matter, who could not play cards day and night both. As the afternoon was closing in the porter brought me a note from the sheriff, who wrote that his prisoner, never expecting to see the outside world after next week, never expecting to meet an interesting human being again, begged of my charity a little chat, asking it only in the name of the good woman he had called "Mother." The sheriff added, "that 'Doc' (as he called him), had behaved so mighty well since he had been nabbed for his funny business with a stage and a Wells-Fargo box, that he'd like to make things pleasant for him if he could, and the day was dull even for a free man."

I consulted my husband. He asked: "Do you want to talk to the man?"

I thought that a stage robber, horse thief and forger, who found the end of his tether fastened

securely to a prison door, might prove interesting; but if he objected, why——

"Oh, no! everyone to their taste," he laughed. "Go on and talk, but don't expect him to lower his mask for you."

Directly then I dropped into the seat behind the sheriff and the fair-haired chap, who was so many kinds of a bad man. Many people had begged pillows from the porter and were napping. Two women were knitting. The engine seemed to be making up lost time, judging from the unusual speed. The prisoner was chatting away about the comfortable arrangements of the interior of one of the old waggons known as "prairie schooners" in the old days, and in his effort to face me he several times hurt his handcuffed wrist to the wincing point. At length the sheriff, glancing out at the flying landscape, laughed a little, and unlocking the bracelet from his own wrist, arose and said good-naturedly: "Take my place, Doc, and talk comfortably; I'll sit over here."

We both stared at him in amazement, but as he sank into the seat opposite he pushed his coat out of the way and sat with his hand resting on his hip-pocket. He was not taking such chances after all.

Doc's eyes and mine met, and in a flash each read the other's thought. He smiled and asked: "Did you ever catch a weazel asleep?"

And I smiled back: "Not in a Pullman car."

We told stories, he stroking my little dog's head. I told him some canine adventure, but he screwed up his face into a laughable sort of deprecation, saying:

"He didn't bank much on dogs, since the hounds had run him down after his last job." I shivered. "What a sensitive woman you are," he said. "I should think your profession would tear you all to pieces. But you're right enough. It's an awful thing to be tracked by dogs, which have become a single sense personified; which take no heed of hunger, thirst, darkness, nor light; which, between heaven and hell, recognise just two things, the master's voice that says: 'Seek! Find!' and the scent, that is *your scent*—the trail that you must either swim or fly to avoid leaving behind you."

His breath came quickly, like a man's who had been running. Suddenly I leaned forward and touched the shameful thing upon his wrist: "Oh!" I exclaimed, "why, why did you ever do it?"

Again he twisted up his face: "Why? I guess," he answered, "it was because of too much and too hard religion from dad, and too much bad company right round the corner. Ministers always seem to think they are all heaven and their boys are all hell."

"But your mother?" I interrupted.

"Mother was all right," he sharply answered. "She was fair to a fellow. She used to tell dad that when young blood danced and all the bones and muscles were growing, a boy just had to jump and rush and caper; that he couldn't walk slow and be solemn and silent, even on Lord's day. Oh; she was the best woman, she——" He stopped short and instinctively tried to draw the steel bracelet up into his sleeve.

"Yet you're——" I reproached.

"Oh!" he interrupted, "she died, you know, and then—well after you once begin you can't stop, because, you see, you never begin alone! There's always some chump who knows, and can betray you if you try to draw back." Then a sullen frown came on his face: "Prison for life!" He looked off at the reddening west: "No more sunrise or sunset—no! no!" he swallowed hard; then, almost violently, he continued: "And do you know that there were fool men, back there at Omaha, who came to congratulate me—good God! to congratulate me that I was so sure to miss a death sentence! I wonder if you can understand at all?"

"Oh, yes; I knew a murderer once," I started, when he cried out, "What, you? *You* knew a murderer?" "Yes," I answered, "I used to play with the sheriff's little son about the jail corridors, and this man mangled himself horribly with a tiny penknife, in an effort, paradoxical as it sounds, to kill himself to prevent the executioner from doing it."

A sort of flame sprang into his light blue eyes, of a sudden his lips pressed into a tense line.

"Right!" he sharply exclaimed. "Right, he was! Why, you ought to understand that; and I believe you do, too! It wasn't the mere dying that kept the fellow awake nights, for all stand to die sometime! And we—the boys who write too well for our own good, and toy with other people's horses, and are hunted quite as often as we hunt—expect to step up lively when we pass in our checks! No, a man's not

afraid to die, but; by thunder, you don't want to be trussed up like a fowl, and then have some measly fellow with dirty hands sling a rope around your neck and shove you through a trap to twirl in the air like a d——d sheep-killing dog! You want to die like a man, not like a cur, and a chap feels some self-respect when he bosses his own job. If I had a chance——" his eyes turned toward the figure of the sheriff, who sat, his left elbow on the window sill, the hand supporting his drooping head. Were his eyes closed? With stealthy swiftness Doc arose, to find the sheriff's face grimly smiling into his and the sheriff's revolver pointing straight at his heart.

An instant they stood, then very quietly: "I wanted a drink," said the bad man.

"Oh," responded the watchful one jocosely, "I thought perhaps you were going to call my attention to our lessening speed?" This with a malicious glance toward the free hands of the prisoner. "Well, I'll have the water brought to you." And under my breath I remarked: "It didn't work, did it?"

"No," he answered, "not that time," and I believe his captor had given him an idea, for from that moment he began to talk at random. He had been pale, but a spot of colour was soon burning upon his rather prominent cheek bones. Hitherto his had been the frank, open manner of the well-brought-up middle-class young Western man, now a subtle change was coming over him; his voice lowered, his pale eyes had a greenish glare in them, and they stole side

glances beneath narrow lids that quivered slightly. I began to see this man's relation to the great cat tribe stealthy, strong, flexible, cruel. He was passing his tongue over his parched lips, was speaking broken sentences, while his nostrils quivered and expanded. The man was laying some desperate plan. I was so sure that involuntarily I whispered to him: "Don't! don't do it!"

He looked at me fixedly, then went on: "Yes, he was right, that murderous friend of yours——" then suddenly he pressed his hand to his stomach and bent over. Mr. Sheriff was at his elbow instantly. "Too many railway doughnuts," groaned Doc.

"Have a drop of this brandy," advised the friendly sheriff.

"We are nearing the supper station," I remarked, "and I must go and prink a little."

"Oh!" said the suddenly sick man, "how like the old Iowa home those words sound, 'to prink.'"

I arose to go. The sheriff stooped to lock the prisoner's wrist to his own. At my stateroom door I turned my head. The prisoner's eyes were glaring greenly at me, and like lightning the forefinger of his free hand flashed to his lips, pleading, cautioning, warning—all were in that swift, secret gesture.

I sank trembling onto the couch. I wanted no supper. "Ought I to speak?" I asked myself. But speak of what? What had I to tell? Only a change of manner, a single gesture. I wiped my forehead and started surprisedly. The scent of tobacco clung to the handkerchief I had picked up instead of my

own. I dropped it with a nervous shiver, then sat and waited.

Supper was over. People were settling for evening games or chats, for we were off again. Then I heard through the rear door of my stateroom the satisfied voice of the thief-taker. He was answering the questions of one who had come aboard at the last station: "Yes, thank God, this was his last night of responsibility. He would have passed his man over to the prison officials this time to-morrow. No, he had never lost sight of his prisoner, even for a moment before, but he was a pretty sick man this evening, and he was therefore allowed the privilege of entering the washroom alone; but," he added, "the speed of the train and the revolver at the door made that safe enough. Still—yes, he *was* staying rather a long time." And the sheriff knocked, calling: "Come Doc, if you feel seedy yet, better come and lie down." (Knock, knock.) "Oh, Doc!" a suddenly tried knob, and then between desperate kicks at the panels of the locked door the repeated cry: "An axe! an axe!"

"T-that axe's only to be used in case of fire or accident, sir!" stammered the porter, "but I can unlock——"

He never finished. The door burst open—the room was empty! A wild cry rang through the car. With a ghastly face the sheriff hurled himself at the bell-cord, jerking it like a madman to an accompaniment of sulphurous oaths. The passengers were thrown into a turmoil. The train was stopped, was searched, then it was backed, and women began to

cry or to turn faint over mental pictures of what might be found out there. We stopped again and the confusion was transferred to the outside. Lanterns were bobbing in the darkness. Suddenly I heard a voice saying: "He's just bringing them up from Green River. They're right in the baggage-car, and he'll lay 'em on for you if you'd like."

With oath-garnished gratitude the frantic sheriff accepted his offer, which meant bloodhounds, and next moment he was tearing into the car searching for something of Doc's that would give "a scent" to the two gaunt, long-eared brutes who were being led out for a man-hunt. With a gasp I caught up the handkerchief and thrust it deep, deep into the dressing-bag, and then sat immovable, watching, listening, wondering! The wires were hot with messages, men were hot with profane argument; but ours was a fast-mail train, and on we went, leaving men on horseback and men on foot, aided by melancholy, lop-eared hounds, and lighted by torches and lanterns, who searched either side the track for what might be left of the fair-haired bad man, who had preferred to "step up lively and pass in his checks" by way of a car-window and a flying leap to death, rather than moulder through the sunless years of a life imprisonment! And being sleepless all that night, I filled the hours with study of the second act of "Renée de Moray," and so it came to pass that ever after, in the shooting of *Claude Burel,* I saw not the face of the man who acted him but the glaring eye, the dilating nostril and warning, pleading gesture of the man

who had that night made himself part of the mighty mystery of the plains, the silent plains, that seem to be stricken dumb by the stupendous import of the message they may hold for man!

Wrapped in a gauze veil, the feathered, laced, and ribboned hat I had worn to the train hung safely out of the way, for my hurried platform walks at various stations I donned a small Scotch cap I had brought from Edinburgh for steamer comfort, the bonnet known to some as the Glengarry. Among the very closest of my friends there was a soldier who had gained an uncomfortable knowledge of Chief Joseph, that had been bought in the Nez Percez campaign. At my request he had given me the tarnished, battered regimental badge from the front of the old cap that had been soaked by rains and scorched by suns and often used as a dipper at the finding of precious water, that drop for drop was of greater value than molten rubies could have been, and I had pinned the crossed muskets and the regimental number in the front of my own cap. Next morning after the escape I was tramping up and down the platform when two men passed, and one, glancing at me a second time, stopped suddenly, drew his heels together and gave me a military salute. I smiled at his mistaking me for someone else and continued my exercise. So, coming again upon the men, both of whom were somewhat in liquor and working hard to pick a fight with the station loungers, when someone called out, "Let the lady pass!" Both men turned and seeing me, straightened up, shoulder to shoulder,

eyes front, while with tipsy gravity they saluted with the sharp precision of mechanical toys. Then, indeed, was I angry, for no one living is more sensitive to ridicule than I am. I started off in search of my lord and master, but was met by the porter who, with the familiarity of his class, addressed me as Miss Cla'h and asked what was the matter. I told him and, hot with anger and swelling with importance, he proceeded to look into the matter while I returned to the car. In a few moments the darky was back crying: "Miss Cla'h, dey ain't no ornary, low-down fellows tryin' to plague you; dey's mighty proud, 'case you-all's come from de same State. Yes'm, dey's Ohio men, and—and dey sent you a message, Miss Cla'h, only I ain't goin' to give it to yer till I see your little cap."

"My cap!" I cried, glancing toward it. He picked it up, looked at it a moment and broke into the contagious laughter of his race, saying: "I'se bound to give you that message now, for sure. Dey's Uncle Sam's boys, Miss Cla'h, an' dey say, very 'spectful, dey like to give you de tip—dat if you don' want to be saluted by any soldiers you meet you mustn't wear de badge of de 21st Infantry on de front porch of your cap. For, you see, dey-all belongs to de 21st deyselves."

And then apologies were in order, and they came from me.

After that I devoted myself steadily to "Renée de Moray," and having a quick study was rough perfect when we found ourselves nearing the end of our long

journey, and I said to myself: "In this last quiet lap of our run, with nothing more to upset my tired nerves, I can make myself unshakingly letter-perfect in my lines, and thus be free to devote all my thought to the directing of the coming rehearsals." Ah, that was a wise person who so earnestly advised against the practice of counting chickens before they were hatched. With jest and laughter, exchanging mutual congratulations upon its being the last station dinner we would have to reckon with, we were rising from the table when the inevitable practical joker, seeing a train moving in the opposite direction to our own, thrust his head into the dining-room and yelled: "All aboard! Look lively! Your train's moving!"

Those who noted the presence of our own train-crew at their corner table merely smiled, but, alas! one young girl sprang up. There was a startled cry, a crash of china, and then she was flying out of the door, across the open space straight toward the track and the moving cars. "Come back! stop!" cried many voices. The train-men leapt to their feet and dashed after her. The grey-haired conductor shouted: "Child! child! for God Almighty's sake, that's not your train." I heard one great, united, agonising shout of "Don't! don't" cut across by a shrill shriek that something stopped in mid-utterance, then silence fell. My husband's arm was about me, his shaken voice was saying quietly: "Turn the other way, Clara; we will just go back by that lower path," and sick at heart I realised he was trying to spare me the sight of something on the upper path. Two fainting

women were being carried back to our train. Then, as I knew he would do, the porter came to me, grey-looking and stammering, to tell one all he knew of the dreadful happening: "'For' God, Miss Cla'h," he said, "dat's de worst ting I've seen yet. Dat little red-cheeked girl, only sixteen years old, jist out from Ireland, poor and pretty, friendless and—and dere she lies, white as a stone image," he gulped hard a moment, "with one leg left for her to hobble on like a little hurt sparrow!"

"Oh, poor child! poor little Irish lass! crippled in a strange land!" I whispered tearfully. Dreadful details were given till I begged for mercy. Then he assured me she had been going out to service, and was alone in the world. They would take her to the hospital in 'Frisco now, "but Lord, Miss Cla'h, dey don't keep 'em dere long, and den what's to 'come of her? And even in de hospital it's hard to be without a cent!"

"But," I asked, "has not that wealthy California lady offered to help her?"

"No, mum, she hasn't!" he snapped angrily.

"Perhaps she has not heard her story yet?" I suggested.

"Yes, she has, too!" he contradicted. "I heard de conductor telling her, and she said 'it was very sad, and such mishaps were trying to delicate nerves,' but she never offered a picayune for her help."

I found in the almost empty maw of my pocket-book one lean, lonely five-dollar bill, but an idea came to me. I begged the porter to get me an envelope,

and then scribbled on a card: " For one month I can be found at the Palace Hotel or at the Baldwin Theatre. A note from your doctor or nurse will command any service in my power, any comfort or convenience you may need, and pray have no hesitation in addressing one who sympathises with you from her heart." The bill and the card I slipped into the envelope and the porter promised to put it into the afflicted girl's hand. He came back directly to say that, drugged with opiates, she was unconscious, but he had pinned the envelope to the bosom of her gown.

When I felt a little less shaken I tried once more to resume my study. Some hours had passed when, oh, good gracious! the wretched porter came to my room and, stammering and stuttering broken apologies for " de mistake " and blaming " some fool fellow that told him so anyhow," he gave me a letter. I read and I burned from my head to my feet. There was a five-dollar bill enclosed—not mine, as I saw at a glance, but still a bill for five dollars—and the note said: " My poor young niece was sent out to us to become our daughter, if she felt contented here, and I came a day's ride up the road to meet and welcome her, and I have found a maimed and, I greatly fear, a dying child. A mistaken story reached every ear, but no one heeded it but you. So long as we live we will keep that bill, and will preserve the generous promise you made to one you believed to be penniless and forlorn." And this was signed by a well-known and wealthy citizen of San Francisco.

Oh, me! I must have had an expressive face for,

though I never spoke one word, as I glanced up at the porter he cried out: "W-why, w-why, Miss Cla'h, for de Lord's sake, w-why don't!" and incontinently fled.

I heaved a great sigh of relief when, at last, I reached my rooms at the hotel, for heaven only knows what might have happened had the journey lasted a day longer!

And then began an almost killing week of acting by night, of rehearsing by day, with all the time that deadly, nauseating fear of failure.

There is no body of American people who can enthuse with such utter abandon as a California crowd. They enjoy their own generosity; they are adepts in the delicate, delightful hypocrisy of the successful hostess. They will welcome you with such shining eyes, such becks and nods and radiantly wreathed smiles, that the "poor player" feels a sort of "Willie, we have missed you" atmosphere inclosing him; and for the moment he will actually believe that these people have spoken of him in their homes, have looked forward to his coming, and his heart will be touched and grateful; and they seeing that will be pleased that *he* is pleased. Thus they are atune, all keyed up to concert pitch, and, with half a play to work out, a great occasion may be expected. Do not think them lacking in the critical faculty. They are as sensitively alert to catch the author's meaning as the artist's expression. They have, too, a sturdy independence of judgment. A thousand nights run in the East will not induce them to accept a play that dis-

pleases them. They decline to follow a leader, but they are warm, they are genial, they are emotional. And what is so contagious as enthusiasm? There is much foreign blood there, and its "bravas!" and "bravos!" are frequent and add a peculiar note of triumph to a burst of applause. The California audience when aroused enjoys its own excitement, and it is a joy indeed to act well enough to arouse it.

At the last rehearsal I stood a woful moment and then burst out: "Oh, boys and girls! this won't do. You must not drag if you want me to succeed, and I know you do. You must rush the house. I don't mean you are to gabble your lines, but be sincere, intense, swift. You, Miss Wilton, have this adventuress to represent; it is a great part. Play it desperately, remembering that if you win you are established for life amid sumptuous surroundings, in social security; if you fail, you face a house of correction, or the lowest slums known to ruined gamblers. Play it with desperate determination. Here is a great opportunity. If you can take the play away from me, do it, only, for heaven's sake, never let down for a moment! We will try this act again."

The night came, the house was packed. The first act, which was not any too brilliant in action, was laid out cold and dead by the hand of the electrician, who, in his desire to get an effect from the lighted city of Aix-les-Bains in the distance, kept the stage in semi-darkness. Oh, it was dreadful! One could not distinguish the colours of the costumes, to say nothing of the expression of the faces. I heard the leading

man growling off to someone: "This is a nice, large, wet blanket spread over us, isn't it?" And under all my gentle, pure-minded, self-sacrificing speeches seethed a burning desire to exterminate by the sword's edge the entire race of electricians.

There was some courteous applause at the curtain's fall, but wild horses could not have dragged me before the curtain. Shaking with silent anger, sick with terror for the next act's fate, I waved people away and rushed to my distant room to change. As I was going out my maid, discreetly silent, offered a small cup of coffee. I drank it and with brief thanks went to meet my fate, for somehow I felt all hung upon the acceptance of that act. I had a curious, numb feeling, my brain seemed blank of every memory or thought save the coming shooting. I wondered dully if that was madness. Then the act was on. I do not remember anything about it until, in hurling myself upon my husband, struggling to reach the revolver, a voice that did not seem to be mine in such piercing anguish cried: "For God's sake, you would not fire upon an unarmed man?" that a mortal terror seemed to possess, to shake me to and fro. The shot was fired, the charge of infidelity made! Then the physical horror of the dead brother lying there, that, to my imagination, bore the face of the fair-haired bad man of the train. The anguished dread of my mother being suspected, followed by the demand of the husband: "Confess—you loved him!" pointing at the victim of his rage.

Suddenly I changed my answer, that should have

been: "Yes, I loved him!" into the more subtle one with its double meaning: "Yes, he loved me!" Then in a sort of mad defence of my mother's honour, my father's shame, my husband's rage, I repeated again and yet again the words: "He loved me! the dead man loved me, yes!" with the ever-rising cry of utter hysteria: "*He loved me!*" The curtain was falling, but the shrieked-out self-accusation went madly on: "*The dead man loved me!*" until finally it was heard faintly through the fallen curtain. Then I caught up my skirts and staggered to my room, leaving the actors amazed by this unrehearsed outburst, standing in their places.

Many times I laughed afterward over Dr. Campbell Shorb's telling of that night. I was under his care, and he came to my room to see if his aid was needed. He used to say: "I rushed around there from the front, with my eyes sticking out of my head far enough to hang your hat on, and that patient of mine came reeling up to me and laid a hand as cold as a dead frog into mine and, with great, scared, blank eyes staring out of a chalk-white face she gasps: 'What are they thinking out there, doctor?' 'Thinking?' I replied, 'why, Good God, they're past thinking! They haven't any sense left. They are standing up howling like hungry wolves. And what in thunder are you doing here?'

"Just then the call-boy and the prompter came butting up together, roaring out: 'Miss Morris! Miss Morris! Oh, please hurry, please!' and she turned and fled down the stage. I stood in the room

and I'm blest if it wasn't just like a madhouse, with the inmates extra bad. Roar, roar, then frantic howl! Roar, roar, howl! and I understood presently this meant her coming and going before the curtain. I tell you it was impressive even away up there. At last she came back, flushed, smiling, beaming. Now listen. At sight of me she gave a little start and said: 'Oh, good evening, doctor,' gave me a thin, hot hand, and added: 'Do you know, I believe the play will go, after all!' I'm blest if she even remembered having seen me before that night! She had been half mad with anxiety. By jove! a woman earns all she gets in such nerve-racking work as that!"

He was right. I did not remember the first meeting. The play was a success. Failing in the East, it triumphed in San Francisco. We succeeded in stampeding the audience. The papers pointed out, as in duty bound, the weak points in the story, but every soul who wept and reared up on end and roared approval at our swift, tensely earnest presentation of it advertised the play and the players, and for years after, "Renée de Moray" was my "bunkie," or at least she was one of them.

XVII

SOME REMINISCENCES OF L. Q. C. LAMAR

THE GREAT PACIFICATOR

BUT just twice in my life have I felt a strong desire to meet, personally, one of the prominent public men known to me only through "information and belief." There was no Mrs. Leo Hunter in either case. I had no desire to hear those lions roar for the entertainment of envious guests crowded into my drawing-room. No, that was not it at all. I just wanted to see them with my own eyes, to hear them speak a few simple words, to be allowed to burn my joss-sticks and swing my incense before them in quiet sincerity. One of these two men I had the pleasure of meeting, and of knowing well, ere he passed over to the great majority waiting in the House of Silence.

Senator Lamar, the beloved of the South, the wonder of Washington, was rapidly becoming the oratorical delight of the whole country. When it became known at the Capitol that Lamar was going to speak, the galleries filled, members of all parties from both Houses sought the floor of the Senate, and officials deserted their offices to crowd to the chamber and listen eagerly to the glowing eloquence of the man who was not afraid to grapple even with those colossi of debate, Blaine and Conkling. The great reading

public was on the alert for the reported speech, which, even in cold black and white, retained much of its grace and charm and colour. The speaker's dignity and courtesy, despite his keen, incisive and damaging arguments, contrasted beautifully with the roughness of some of his opponents. One felt that behind all the elegance of diction, the graceful flights of fancy, there was solid statesmanship; and many people believed that Senator Lamar was truly and sincerely working for the reconciliation of the States, and so respected as well as admired him—and I was quite content as one of that body.

Judge of my satisfaction when, my professional duties having taken me to Washington, my friend, Col. Donn Piatt, came hurriedly into my sitting-room one day to ask if I would receive at once Senator Lamar, whom he said he had met by chance in the office below, and who had astonished him by expressing a wish for an introduction. Much pleased at my good fortune, I nevertheless asked jestingly: "But why astonished, Colonel?"

"Why," he exclaimed, "do you know nothing, then, of the man's character, his peculiarities? Quiet, retiring, self-absorbed, he cut society long ago; and, while devoted to old friends, his shy, shrinking dislike of meeting strangers grows upon him so that he is in a fair way to become a sort of hermit. He calls me friend, and treats me as one, but I assure you I never before heard him express a desire to meet a stranger, and—and if I don't make great haste he may change his mind, or forget all about the matter."

"Gracious!" I cried, ungratefully. "Why don't you hasten, then! Don't stop to explain now, and so lose me my opportunity of meeting the silver-tongued one from the South!"

And, with the rueful comment: "There's a woman for you! Asks a man a question, and then demands to know why he stops to answer it!" he laughingly descended officeward; and, while I exchanged the comb in my hair for an ivory one, which I thought looked well in the wavy brownness, and murmured regretfully for probably the ten-thousandth time: "Such a very common colour—brown," and drew the powder-puff lightly across my nose and chin, I saw for the last time the Lamar of my imagination—the lean, long, strong man, with the lion-like mane of silver-streaked, dark hair, the piercing eyes, the leathery brown skin and the chin-whisker and moustache so favoured by the middle-aged men of the South. One moment he existed, the next—there were approaching steps, an opening door, an introduction, and, good heavens!—he was gone. At one touch of reality he disappeared into space and only a beautiful courtesy and an ugly chin-whisker remained to remind me of my imaginary Lamar.

The real man's voice was low, and softer than that of any woman's I knew. He was of medium height and heavily-fleshed; his eyes were small, and—Oh, Mr. Lamar! How could you be so disappointing?—they were light-blue, and gentler than his voice. Then his short, broad figure was topped by a long, high-browed face, and—final and finishing touch of dif-

ference—the leonine hair was really fine and soft, long and clinging, and worn, as I honestly believe, in a fashion favoured by no other man in America. Ohio's noble "old Roman" (Thurman) wore rather long hair, but the lobes of his ears were visible; while Mr. Lamar brought his hair down from the parting straight and smooth, a good inch below his ears, and then, as a sailor says "clubbed" it under, and in thus eliminating every sign of that most expressive feature, the ear, he added greatly to the seeming length and narrowness of his face. He laughed more with his eyes than with throat and lips, and a crowd of impish little puckers gathered about them when his eyes began to twinkle, then smoothed themselves out again when he became serious. He was giving me a somewhat stately greeting, when I noticed the extraordinary fineness and smoothness of his clasping fingers, and glancing down, I exclaimed: "Mercy, Senator, I do believe you have a lazier hand than even Colonel Piatt's!" Both men laughed guiltily; and Mr. Lamar turned his hand this way and that. "You find indolence here," he remarked; then, extending the left one, he smiled rather ruefully, asking: "And in this?"

"In that," I promptly added, "I find urbanity."

And, with a chuckle, Colonel Piatt cried: "She's got you, Lamar! Indolence and urbanity—she's got you!"

Senator Lamar, assuming an attitude of exaggerated sentimentality, responded, "It is the common fate—she has got us all!" and dropped into the

room's easiest chair, which I had turned comfortably with its back to the light. I placed myself humbly on a lower seat, and we proceeded to make acquaintance.

"Mr. Lamar," I said to him, one day, some time afterward, "don't you know that your Southern chin-whisker is very unbecoming to you? Why don't you wear your moustache alone—that whisker adds so to the seeming length of your face?"

"I know; an artist friend told me that long ago—but it's too late to change now; and say, shall I tell you how I came to wear the confounded thing at all?"

"Oh, do!" I cried, and—heaven forgive him!—this is the tale that, with all gravity and seeming sincerity, he told me:

"You see," he commenced, "the time came around when I felt I must enlist, and I resigned my professorship in the university—where I believe I held the chair of ethics and metaphysics—and, coöperating with my friend, C. H. Mott, undertook to raise a regiment. Now, in the old home, the name of Lamar means something. The people down there have memories, and my father and my gifted brother were not yet forgotten, and—well, you see, where a Lamar led, a lot of fellows were sure to follow, and I knew right well from the first they would never be satisfied till they had cocked me up as an officer of some sort over them; and, in spite of my knowing nothing on earth about the game of war, those boys, every one of them, would look to their old neighbour and

friend, Lamar, for example and guidance. Now, wasn't that a nice situation?" he asked forlornly.

"Yes," I replied, "I think it was. Their trust in you—their reliance upon your courage and wisdom—was touching; and you know very well now, Colonel, that down in your heart you were proud of it?"

He shook his head. "No," he said, "not then. I was too mightily afraid I might prove a broken reed that would pierce those who leaned upon it for support. Afterward, little woman, when I had learned what a battle meant, I—well, perhaps I was a bit vain of their trust in me then—because I had learned that I could trust myself. But just at first—my!" He wiped his brow as at a recollection. "How was I to know that my nerves might not betray me when I was under fire the first time? I said to myself, night and day: 'Suppose, Lushe, you should be frightened?'" He leaned forward, and laid an impressive forefinger on my wrist. "Understand, there's no disgrace in a man being rattled once—say in his maiden battle. Every fellow has a legitimate right to *one* scare, but damn the man that scares twice! The very bullets would avoid him. But I was not worried about the possibility of a second attack of—well, let's be frank and say—fear. No, thank the Lord! But what did keep me on the rack was this: Suppose we are ordered forward, and then we are halted long enough for our ardour to die out and for the horror of the action going on to get hold of our imagination, and the boys get scared (according to their right), they will as one man turn to you, Lushe La-

mar, expecting to see you calm as a May morning, to hear you say: 'Steady boys—we'll get our chance presently, and then we'll give 'em——' Eh? you know the prescribed and correct ending of that sentence? And then, Great God of War! suppose I should have my scare on at the same moment, and the boys saw it? Oh, Nineteenth Mississippi! Oh, boys and neighbours! Have I not seen you run in many a game at home? I said, at last, to my tormented self: 'I'll stay at home; I will recruit others; I will arm and equip them to the last dollar I possess, but I won't run the risk of shaking the confidence of my own men by momentary weakness.' For, you see, I knew in my soul that any funk of mine would only be a matter of moments. It was midnight, and I cried aloud: 'If only I could hide that possible nervous tremor!' The word 'hide' caught my attention. Suddenly I slipped out to the gallery, and, looking up at the stars, an idea came to me. I knew my face was not an expressive one. My eyes, I could control to steadiness any time. My voice was absolutely obedient to my will. Just one feature I could not control when under excitement of any kind—my mouth. Anger, pain or fear would blanch my lips instantly, and I knew they quivered under great emotion, so it simply came to this: If I could somehow get a little apron or curtain over my mouth, I might go a-soldiering with the best of our people; and, like a thief in the night, I then and there stole into the sleeping-room of one who put his faith in bear's grease. For days and days the razor and the bear's grease of the

unsuspecting friend filled my secret hours with scraping and anointing—with wild hopes and desperate fears. Then, at last, the shadow darkened on my lip. One glorious day, my blessed little wife frowned at my kiss because my chin was rough and had scratched her cheek. The recruiting proceeded, the regiment was formed, and I became lieutenant-colonel, and—and——"

"And," I interrupted, "after your first battle, you were honourably mentioned by three different generals—which throws a black cloud of suspicion on the truth of that story, Colonel?"

But he kept perfectly serious as he asked: "Did you never hear of a brave man being frightened in a first action?"

"Yes," I answered. "A mighty fighter on our side once told me that the sight of the wounded being carried off the field, as his regiment advanced, turned him sick with terror."

"And yet," he smiled, "you won't believe in my reason for assuming this protecting beard of mine."

Then, suddenly, we were at war about the sentimentality of the Southern men over their women. I argued that it was exaggerated and sometimes absurd; that *every* women was proclaimed a famous belle and beauty. I caught up a paper. "Look here!" I cried. "Is not this a commonplace face—without chic, without beauty, not even a wholesome prettiness? Yet here she is labelled 'the lovely Miss Lulu Somebody, the belle of——' The town is so small that even you cannot locate it in Georgia. Your tourna-

ments and jousts, while occasionally gotten up with skill and knowledge, are too often absurdities."

"Yes, yes!" he admitted, "but every man down there considers it a girl's right to be hailed as a Queen of Beauty. Women ought to be praised—*over*-praised, if you like. Every dry-goods clerk can pen a sonnet to his lady's eyebrow. The one may be as imperfect as the other, but both parties are pleased with the spirit of the thing. And now, tell me honestly, don't you think the men of the North are lacking in tender devoir? We don't stop at kissing finger-tips down there—one does not have to be a Pope in the South to have an adorer kneel and kiss a little slipper-toe or a riding-boot before slipping it into a stirrup. Would a Northern man do that?"

"My very dear Mr. Lamar," I replied, "the difference is not so great as you imagine. The man of the North hates pose. He cannot stand on the street bareheaded and blow kisses after a woman in a carriage, as I have seen done in Atlanta's streets. Nor could he, before a group of spectators, kneel and kiss the riding-boot of his fairest fair; but his tender sentiment would probably move him, years after marriage, to kneel and remove the muddy boot, and chafe into warmth the chill little foot, and kiss it as he slips it into a bedroom slipper, for the sentiment of absolute devotion to his womankind is the hall-mark of the American man the world over."

Mr. Lamar leaned over, and patting my hand, said: "God bless you, little woman; that picture of sentiment is worth a mint, yes, a mint!"

The movement pushed from his knee a heavy, legal-looking book, while the bulging of his unbuttoned coat betrayed a paper-covered novel, crowded into an inner pocket. I covered my eyes, crying, "Oh, Senator! Oh, our poor country! What pabulum for the mind of a maker of laws!"

He took down my hands, and showed me the magic name of Dumas. "Oh!" I exclaimed. "Is he not splendid? Was not his African blood worth rubies and diamonds to him? There was where that opulent and barbaric imagination came from."

"See here!" interrupted the Senator, sternly, "I'm mighty glad you are not a man and in the Senate, for I don't know how often you have stolen my thunder. That's been one of my pet ideas—about Dumas's teeming fancy being always vivid, always active. Story-reading is a rest and a refreshment to my mind just as the recess games are a refreshment to the boy-pupil's mind. The play is refreshing, too, only——" He cuddled down more comfortably into his chair. "Only one can't enjoy that in one's slippers and friendly old gown."

"No," I said. "The actors hurry along so inconsiderately, and leave no margin for reveries or philosophical contemplation of the situation."

He reached threateningly for a heavy ruler lying on the table, and I hastened to add: "Jesting aside, Mr. Lamar, do you know everyone says that you and General Garfield are the two bookiest men—the two most indefatigable readers in Washington?"

He laughed a little. "Well," he said, "Garfield

is always at it. I've known that man to startle a stageful of quiet people by a great laugh he had found in the book he was reading. Ah, he is a fine fellow!"

"Do you know who I think is our greatest public man to-day?" I asked. "The man to whom I refer is quick, impetuous, a hard hitter, and a fair fighter. Oh, I don't claim that he is an angel, mind you!—nor that he could keep his angelic robes absolutely spotless, if he had them—but to wisdom, courage and loyalty add this crowning charm: he is a polished gentleman. So, Senator, to my mind, the mightiest American we have to-day is——"

Mr. Lamar put his finger quickly upon my lips, and announced. "James G. Blaine? You are right," he said. "He is" (he separated the word into exact syllables) "mag-nif-i-cent! Yes, mag-nif-i-cent!"

He sat there a moment silent, and then something of the man's big nature cropped out, something of his power of unselfish appreciation of an opponent's ability which, in that period of bitter animosities, seemed almost beautiful.

"Mr. Blaine," he said, "is a great man, and sometimes he is misunderstood because of his very brilliancy and audacity; but people err who charge him with mere personal ambition. He is ambitious for the country; and, further, really to appreciate Mr. Blaine, instead of being a friend one needs to be his opponent in order to feel the weight of his blows, to taste the bitterness of his satire, to see his quickness and dexterity; and then, when all is over, when he has knocked you about and hammered your argu-

ment or bill or amendment or what-not all out of shape, you chance to meet the man, the individual, and he gives you a straight, frank glance, a warm handgrasp, and says in a hearty voice: 'Are you going down now? Let us foot it together, then; the walk will do us both good,' or 'By Jove! I'm hungry, after all that talk. Come on let us go somewhere and get a bite to eat,' and the warmth and geniality cheer you like wine, and the absence of personal animosity makes you forget the two words—North and South! You feel only that you are both Americans, and your heart thrills with respect and admiration for so generous a nature. Ah, as you say, 'it takes a mighty man to charm his enemies,' and James G. does it often!"

I had not said anything of the kind, but *he* had, which was more to the point and very illuminating, I thought.

Mr. Lamar's dreaminess became a veritable Oriental languor at times. Yet who may say those long hours passed in seeming idleness were wasted hours?

"My mind is slow. It moves slowly," he often said. Now, as Henry Ward Beecher took keenest pleasure in watching the play of light and colour in unset gems, giving many an odd moment, here and there, to turning them on his palm, that he might catch their purest rays of colour, so did Mr. Lamar love to fondle an idea, to turn and twist it, to consider its weight, its possible value, under such and such circumstances. The main idea in the greatest speech of his life, he had had in his mind for years;

and if that last sentiment in his great Sumner eulogy was the result of much dreaming, one can only thank God for the creating of the dreamer!

And, yet—Oh, man of many surprises!—later on, as Secretary of the Interior, he astonished his world by not only abandoning his own indolence, but by waking up a host of loitering employees and transforming them into active, earnest workers. Nor was his a case of "new broom." Nine o'clock each morning found the Secretary at his desk right along, for Oklahoma was requiring all the time he could give it.

Ah, great is the power of singleness of purpose! This Lamar on one side was all sentiment, flowery speech, warm impulse; but run about him quick, and see on the other side—a Lamar, shrewd, cautious, far-sighted and alert. No matter which side he turned to you, the one great fine purpose of his life was to reconcile the North and the South—to win, not forgiveness so much as forgetfulness of the past. Poor, great man! His work was cut out for him—with the flaunters of the bloody shirt on the one side and the sneering, carping Bourbons on the other. In every man's life there is the flood-mark of some supreme moment of power, high above the fullest tide of daily life. It remains indelible and unforgetable; and surely in the changeful, romantic life of this remarkable L. Q. C. Lamar there was no greater, no nobler, no more dramatic moment than that in which, to the disapproving incredulity of his friends and the public, he rose in the Senate to second the

usual resolutions in that body and to make a memorial address upon Charles Sumner. Think of it! It brings a catch to the breath, even now, to recall that dread moment! In that whole crowded chamber there was probably not one person who did not mentally accuse him of incredibly bad taste—at the least. Lamar—ex-fire-eater, ex-secessionist—eulogising Sumner! There were disquieting fears on his own side for the outcome of the mad effort which they could only hope might prove but a perfunctory and formal tribute to the memory of their mortal enemy. The other side smiled grimly at one another in anticipation of the awful bump with which the speaker would land between the two stools of Northern and Southern sensibilities.

The pale man, who rose so quietly on the left of the chamber, standing at the end of the aisle next the center, knew his waiting was over. He had found an opportunity at last, great enough to command the attention of his world, and he meant to seize it, boldly and bravely, while honouring the dead, and to make one mighty appeal to the old-time feeling of brotherly love. He saw that "conciliation" was absolutely indispensable to the welfare of his people; he would try to unlock the hearts that were growing colder day by day, and perhaps mutual grief would soften them; perhaps tears would wash away the suspicion on one side and the morose resentment on the other.

But, dear God, what a task! How was he to please one side without outraging the other? What

sincerity, what exquisite tact, what perfect judgment, what fine discernment were required. No wonder he was white, no wonder his eyes burned almost black with suppressed excitement; for, when he faced his critical audience, he only possessed of his positive knowledge one single qualification for his task—sincerity. For, personally, he did regret Sumner's loss; and that sincerity was in his grave and quiet voice, when he began: "Mr. Speaker, in rising to second the resolutions just offered, I desire to add a few remarks which have occurred to me as appropriate to the occasion——" and then the wonderful address went on.

The splendour of the dead man's intellect, the high morality and the purity of his life were dwelt upon, and his passionate belief in freedom as the natural right of every intelligent being having the outward form of man. Oh, what delicate ground the speaker was treading on! Listen to these words anent the slavery question: "In this fiery zeal, this earnest warfare against the wrong (slavery) *as he saw it,* there entered no enduring personal animosity toward the men whose lot it was to be born into the system which he denounced!"

With thrilling voice the speaker recalled the kindness and sympathy which Mr. Sumner had displayed toward the impoverished and suffering people of the Southern States. "Thus," Mr. Lamar declared, with tender triumph, "thus unveiling to our gaze the generous, warm heart within the zealot's bosom." Tears were stealing down bearded cheeks,

but as he went on to recall that knightly act of courtesy to a conquered people—when Mr. Sumner, whom he called "the first pacificator," offered his amazing resolution, "That the names of battles with fellow citizens shall not be contained in the army register or placed on the regimental colours of the United States,"—more than one head fell low upon a heaving breast. Then, approaching gradually but surely to the real object of his speech, he told how, when he first came to Washington, his impulse had been to go to Mr. Sumner, offer his hand with his heart in it and thank him from his soul, but a restraint was upon him. He thought other days would come when the act would be less liable to misconstruction. "To-morrow—to-morrow, perhaps—and lo! a day had come when there was no to-morrow for that purpose. How many others were doing a like thing? Charles Sumner believed all cause of distrust and strife between North and South had passed away. Are there not many of us who believe the same thing?" And then, indeed, the reason of his address became evident in the tender, touching, passionate appeal for "complete reconciliation," and so closed with the heart-thrilling words: "Would that the spirit of the illustrious dead, whom we lament to-day, could speak from the grave to both parties in this deplorable discord, in tones which should reach each and every heart throughout this broad territory: 'My countrymen, know one another, and you will love one another!'"

A moment's silence—then the chamber and the

galleries, Democrats and Republicans, diplomats and nobodies, burst into applause which the Speaker did not check. L. Q. C. Lamar had had his foot in the stirrup, but he was in the saddle now, and he rode as the Great Pacificator!

XVIII

LOOKING BACKWARD

WHEN the late Mr. Augustin Daly bestowed even a modicum of his confidence, his friendship, upon a man or woman, the person so honoured found the circulation of his blood well maintained by the frequent and generally unexpected demands for his presence, his unwavering attention and sympathetic comprehension. As with the royal invitation that is a command, only death positive or threatening could excuse non-attendance, and though his friendship was in truth a liberal education, the position of even the humblest confidant was no sinecure, for the plans he loved to describe and discuss were not confined to that day and season, but, were long, daring looks ahead, great coups for the distant, unborn years.

The season had closed on Saturday. Monday I was to sail for England, and early that morning the housemaid watched for the carriage. My landlady was growing quivery about the chin, because I had to cross alone to join Mr. and Mrs. James Lewis, who had gone ahead. My mother was gay with a sort of crippled hilarity that deceived no one, as she prepared to go with me to say good-bye at the dock, while little Ned, the son of the house, proudly gath-

ered together rug, umbrella, hand-bag, books, etc., ready to go down with us and escort my mother back home—when a cab whirled to the door and stopped.

"Good heavens!" I cried, "what a blunder. I ordered a carriage; we can't all crowd into that thing!"

Then a boy was before me, holding out one of those familiar, summoning half-sheets, with a line or two of the jetty-black, impishly-tiny, Daly scrawls—and I read:

"Must see you one minute at office. Cabby will race you down. Have your carriage follow and pick you up here. Don't fail! A. DALY."

Ah, well! A. Daly—he who must be obeyed had me in good training. I flung one hand to the mistress, the other to the maid in farewell, pitched headlong into the cab, and went whirling down Sixth Avenue and across to the theatre stage-door, then upstairs to the morsel of space called by courtesy the private office.

Mr. Daly nonchalantly held out his hand, looked me over and said: "That's a very pretty dress—becoming, too—but is it not too easily soiled? Salt water you know is——"

"Oh," I broke in, "it's for general street wear—my travelling will be done in nightdress, I fancy."

"Ah, bad sailor, eh?" he asked, as I stood trembling with impatience.

"The worst! But you did not send for me to talk dress or about my sailing qualities?"

"My dear," he said suavely, "your temper is positively rabid." Then he glanced at the clock on his desk and his manner changed. He said swiftly and curtly: "Miss Morris, I want you to go to every theatre in London, and——"

"But I can't!" I interrupted, "I have not money enough for that!"

"Money!" he snapped. "You will receive the courtesy of all the theatres. Present your name."

"But my name is not known over there!"

"Indeed!" he exclaimed angrily, "do you think the leading actress of the City of New York is a nonentity abroad?"

I grinned maliciously as I replied: "Well, Mr. Daly, as you have yourself this moment made the discovery of my exalted position, you can't blame London for its ignorance of my existence."

He frowned and waved his hand impatiently. "Use my name, then, or ask courtesy from E. A. Sothern. He crosses with you and you know him. But mind, go to every reputable theatre, and (impressively) report to me at once if you see any leading man with exceptional ability of any kind."

I gasped. It seemed to me I heard the leaden fall of my heart. "But, Mr. Daly, what a responsibility! How on earth could I judge an actor for you?"

He held up an imperative hand. "You think more after my own manner than any other person I know of. You are sensitive, responsive, quick to acknowledge another's ability, and so are fitted to study London's leading men for me!"

I was aghast, frightened to the point of approaching tears! Suddenly I bethought me. "I'll tell Mr. Lewis. He is there already, you know, and let him judge for you."

"Lewis? Good Lord! He has no independence! He'd see in an actor just what he thought I wanted him to see! I tell you, I want *you* to sort over London's leading men, and, if you see anything exceptional, secure name and theatre and report to me. Heaven knows, two long years have not only taught me that you have opinions, but the courage of them!"

Racing steps came up the stairs, and little Ned's voice called: "Miss Clara! Miss Clara! We are here!"

I turned to Mr. Daly and said mournfully: "You have ruined the pleasure of my trip."

"Miss Morris, that's the first untruth you ever told me. Here, please——" and he handed me a package of new books.

"Thanks!" I cried, and then flew down the stairs. Glancing up, I saw him looking earnestly after me. "Did you speak?" I asked hurriedly.

"That gown fits well—don't spoil it with seawater!"

And half-laughing, half-vexed, but wholly frightened at the charge laid upon me, I sprang into the carriage, to hold hands with mother all the way down to the crowded dock.

One day I received in London this note from Mr. Augustin Daly:

"My Dear Miss Morris:—I find no letter here—impatiently,
"A. D."

And straightway I answered:

"My Dear Mr. Daly:—I find no actor here—afflictedly,
"C. M."

And lo, on my very last night in London, after our return from Paris, I found the exceptional leading man.

Ten days later, on a hot September morning, I was hurling myself upon my mother in all the joy of home-coming, when I saw leaning against the clock on the mantel the unmistakable envelope, bearing the impious black scribble that generally meant a summons. I opened it and read:

"Cleaners in full possession here—look out for soap and pails, and report directly at box-office—don't fail! A. Daly."

I confess I was angry, for I was so tired and the motion of the steamer was still with me, and besides my own small affairs were of more interest to me just then than the greater ones of the manager. However, my two years of training held good. In an hour I was picking my way across wet floors among mops and pails toward the sanity and dry comfort of Mr. Daly's office. He held my hands closely for a moment, then broke out complainingly: "You've behaved nicely, haven't you? Not a single line sent to tell what you were seeing, doing, thinking?"

"I beg your pardon—I distinctly remember sending you a line." He scowled blackly. I went on: "I

thought your note to me was meant as a model, so I copied it carefully."

Formerly this sort of thing had kept us at daggers drawn, but now he only laughed, and shaking his hand impatiently to and fro, said: "Stop it! oh, stop it! So you could not find even one leading man worth while, eh?"

"Yes—just one!"

"Then why on earth didn't you write me?"

"Couldn't—I only found him on our last night in London."

Mr. Daly's face was alight in a moment. He caught up a scrap of paper and a pencil and, after the manner of the inexperienced interviewer, began: "What's he like?"

"Tall, flat-backed, square-shouldered, free-moving, and wears a long dress-coat—that shibboleth of a gentleman—as if that had been his custom ever since he left his mother's knee."

Mr. Daly ejaculated "good!" at each clause, and scribbled his impish small scribble on the bit of paper which rested on his palm.

"What did he do?" he asked eagerly.

"He didn't do," I answered lucidly.

"What do you mean, Miss Morris?"

"What I say, Mr. Daly."

"But if the man doesn't do anything, what is there remarkable about him?"

"Why, just that. It was what he didn't do that produced the effect."

"A-a-ah," said Mr. Daly, with long-drawn satis-

faction, scribbling rapidly. "I understand, and you thought Miss, that you could not judge an actor for me! What was the play?"

"Bulwer's 'Money,' and Marie Wilton was superb as——"

"Never mind Marie Wilton," he interrupted impatiently, writing, "but *Alfred Evelyn* is such an awful prig."

"Isn't he?" I acquiesced, "but this actor made him human. You see, Mr. Daly, most *Evelyns* are like a bottle of gas-charged water: forcibly restrained for a time, then there's a pop and a bang, and in wild freedom the water is foaming thinly over everything in sight. This man didn't kowtow in the early acts, but was curt, cold, showing signs of rebellion more than once, and in the big scene, well——"

"Yes?" asked Mr. Daly eagerly.

"Well, that was where he didn't do. He didn't bang or rave or work himself up to a wild burst of tears!" ("Thank God!" murmured Mr. Daly and scribbled fast.) "He told the story of his past, sometimes rapidly, sometimes making a short, absolute pause. When he reached the part referring to his dead mother, his voice fell two tones, his words grew slower, more difficult, and finally stopped. He left some of his lines out entirely—actually forcing the people to do his work in picturing for themselves his sorrow and his loss—while he sat staring helplessly at the floor, his closed fingers slowly tightening, trying vainly to moisten his dry lips. And when the unconsciously sniffling audience broke suddenly into ap-

plause, he swiftly turned his head aside, and with the knuckle of his forefinger brushed away two tears. Ah, but that knuckle was clever! His finger-tips would have been girly-girly or actory, but the knuckle was the movement of a man, who still retained something of his boyhood about him."

Mr. Daly's grey, dark-lashed eyes were almost black with pleased excitement as he asked: "What's his name?"

"Coghlan—Charles Coghlan."

"Why, he's Irish?"

"So are you—Irish-American," I answered defensively, pretending to misunderstand him.

"Well, you ought to be Irish yourself!" he said sternly.

"I did my best," I answered modestly. "I was born on St. Patrick's Day!"

"In the mornin'?" he asked

"The very top of it, sor!"

"More power to you then!" at which we both laughed, and I rose to go.

As I picked up my sunshade, I remarked casually: "Ah, but I was glad to have seen, for once at least, England's great actor."

"This Coghlan?"

"Good gracious, no!"

"What, there is another, and you have not mentioned him—after my asking you to report any exceptional actor you saw?"

"I beg your pardon, sir. You asked me to report every exceptional leading man. This actor's leading

man's days are past. He is a star by the grace of God's great gifts to him, and his own work."

"Well!" snapped Mr. Daly, "even a star will play where money enough is offered him, will he not?"

"There's a legend to that effect, I believe."

"Will you favour me, Miss Morris, with this actor's name?"

"Certainly. He is billed as Mr. Henry Irving."

Mr. Daly looked up from his scribbling. "Irving? Irving? Is not he the actor that old man Bateman secured as support for his daughters?"

"Yes, that was the old gentleman's mistaken belief; but the public thought differently, and laboured with Papa Bateman till it convinced him that his daughters were by way of supporting Mr. Irving."

A grim smile came upon the managerial lips as he asked, "What does he look like?"

"Well, as a general thing, I think he will look wonderfully like the character he is playing. Oh, don't frown so! He—well he is not beautiful, neither can I imagine him a pantaloon actor, but his face will adapt itself splendidly to any strong character make-up, whether noble or villainous." Mr. Daly was looking pleased again. I went on: "He aspires, I hear to Shakespeare, but there is one thing of which I am sure. He is the mightiest man in melodrama to-day!"

"How long did it take to convince you of that, Miss Morris? One act—two—the whole five acts?"

"His first five minutes on the stage, sir. His busi-

ness wins applause without the aid of words, and you know what that means."

Again that elongated "A-a-ah!" Then, "Tell me of that five minutes," and he thrust a chair toward me.

"Oh," I cried, despairingly, "that will take so long, and will only bore you."

"Understand, please, nothing under Heaven that is connected with the stage can ever bore me." Which statement was unalloyed truth.

"But indeed," I feebly insisted, only to be brought up short with the words, "Kindly allow me to judge for myself."

To which I beamingly made answer: "Did I not beg you to do that months ago?" But he was growing vexed, and curtly commanded: "I want those first five minutes—what he did, and how he did it, and what the effect was, and then" (speaking dreamily) "I shall know—I shall know."

Now at Mr. Daly's last long-drawn-out "A-a-ah," anent Mr. Irving's winning applause without words, I believed an idea, new and novel, had sprung into his mind, while his present rapt manner would tell anyone familiar with his ways that the idea was rapidly becoming a plan. I was wondering what it could be, when a sharp "Well?" startled me into swift and beautiful obedience.

"You see, Mr. Daly, I knew absolutely nothing of the story of the play that night. 'The Bells' were, I supposed, church-bells. In the first act the people were rustic—the season winter—snow flying in every

time the door opened. The absent husband and father was spoken of by mother and daughter, lover and neighbour. Then there were sleigh bells heard, whose jingle stopped suddenly. The door opened—*Matthias* entered and for the first time winter was made truly manifest to us, and one drew himself together instinctively, for the tall, gaunt man at the door was cold—chilled, just to the very marrow of his bones. Then, after general greetings had been exchanged, he seated himself in a chair directly in the centre of the stage, a mere trifle in advance of others in the scene, and proceeded to remove his long leggings. He drew a great coloured handkerchief and brushed away some clinging snow; then leaning forward, with slightly tremulous fingers, he began to unfasten a top buckle. Suddenly the trembling ceased, the fingers clenched hard upon the buckle, the whole body became still, then rigid—it seemed not to breathe! The one sign of life in the man was the agonisingly strained sense of hearing! His tortured eyes saw nothing. Utterly without speech, without feeling he listened—breathlessly listened! A cold chill, crept stealthily about the roots of my hair. I clenched my hands hard and whispered to myself: 'Will it come, good God, will it come, the thing he listens for?' When with a wild bound, as if every nerve and muscle had been rent by an electric shock, he was upon his feet; and I was answered even before that suffocating cry of terror—'The bells! the bells!'—and under cover of the applause that followed I said: 'Haunted! Innocent or guilty, this man is haunted!' And Mr.

Daly, I bowed my head to a great actor, for though fine things followed, you know the old saying, that 'no chain is stronger than its weakest link,' well I always feel that no actor is greater than his carefullest bit of detail."

Mr. Daly's pale face had acquired a faint flush of colour: "Thank you!" he said, with real cordiality, and I was delighted to have pleased him, and also to see the end of my troubles, and once more took up the sunshade.

"I think an actor like that could win any public, don't you?"

"I don't know," I lightly answered. "He is generally regarded as an acquired taste."

"What do you mean?" came the sharp return.

"Why, you must have heard that Mr. Irving's eccentricities are not to be counted upon the fingers of both hands?"

Mr. Daly lifted his brows and smiled a contented smile: "Indeed? And pray, what are these peculiarities?"

"Oh, some are of the figure, some of movement, and some of delivery. A lady told me over there that he could walk like each and every animal of a Noah's ark; and people lay wagers as to whether London will force him to abandon his elocutionary freaks, or he will force London to accept them. I am inclined to back Mr. Irving, myself."

"What! What's that you say? That this fine actor you have described has a marked peculiarity of delivery—of speech?"

"Marked peculiarities? Why, they are murderous! His strange inflections, his many mannerisms are very trying at first, but he conquers before——"

A cry stopped me—a cry of utter disappointment and anger! Mr. Daly stood staring at his notes a moment, then he exclaimed violently: "D——n! d——n!! oh, d——n!!!" and savagely tore his scribbled-on paper into bits and flung them on the floor.

Startled at his vexation, convulsed with suppressed laughter at the infantile quality of his profanity, I ventured, in a shaking voice, "I think I'd better go?"

"I think you had!" he agreed curtly; but as I reached the door he said in his most managerial tone: "Miss Morris, it would be better for you to begin with people's faults next time——"

But with the door already open I made bold to reply: "*Excuse me, Mr. Daly, but there isn't going to be any next time for me!*"

And I turned and fled, wondering all the way home, as I have often wondered since, what was the plan that went so utterly aglae that day? Mr. Coghlan he engaged after failing in his first effort, but that other, greater plan; what was it?

XIX

ALESSANDRO SALVINI

CAN any one of us to-day name a young man who can enter a room, pay a woman his homage kneeling, then recover his upright position and join in the general conversation, without provoking a smile of derision, without arousing that sick pang of mortification one feels at seeing a friend make a fool of himself? No! To the lover alone is the kneeling position permissible to-day, and even he is exposed to the danger of ridicule in his rising, if he scrambles or lays hold of furniture, or—poor wight!—if he drag at his fair one's draperies for assistance. Yet, it was on his knee that young Alessandro Salvini first presented himself before me. In a burst of extravagant admiration he had solemnly assured my husband that it was absolutely necessary for his peace of mind that he should see me and offer his homage in person. Amused by the lad's enthusiasm Mr. Harriott brought him to me, and straightway he crossed the room, knelt, and, gravely lifting my hand to his lips, said with glowing eyes upraised: "Madame, so my father would do, were he here to see that 'death.' You have given the stage a companion piece to the 'death' in 'Morte Civile.'"

I fairly gasped at the daring presumption of the

compliment. "Don't!" I cried; "only think one moment of the difference."

"The difference is, madame, just the difference between *intaglio* and *cameo*—both the scenes are gems, perfect and without flaw. I adore cameos, madam!"

"And I," I laughed, "worship intaglios!" And he was standing at my side and we were all discussing the art of gem cutting, and not a soul of us had smiled at the lad's action, so simple and natural had it seemed.

I suppose it was the influence of his Italian blood, of his actor ancestry, but always there was that touch of the romantic about him, while a certain grave, almost sombre air gave him a dignity surprising in one so young. At that first meeting, in speaking the words, "so my father would do, were he here," he sounded the key-note to his own character. His father's name was the *open sesame* to Alessandro's mind and heart, and the term "my father" was his shibboleth, while the standard by which he measured acting, honour, judgment, taste, and the general conduct of a gentleman, was also that idolised father, Tommaso Salvini.

When I first met him he had already developed a passionate longing to go upon the stage. He had been to Mr. Palmer, who had not encouraged him, principally because he knew Signor Salvini had other plans for his son, and partly because his English was still defective; and, thinking to get rid of his importunities at one fell blow, Mr. Palmer said to him

one day: "Well, come in next week and recite for me Hamlet's soliloquy in English, and then we'll talk things over."

"Thank you," briefly responded the lad and retired, and Mr. Palmer, with a sigh of relief, went home feeling he had washed his hands of that affair. But, alas! a few days later he was informed that young Salvini awaited him in the lobby. He was vexed, but, being a man of his word, he straightway seated himself in the middle of the parquet while Alessandro, with set square jaw and knit brows, clambered up on the stage and slowly and carefully declaimed "To be or not to be." Of course it was parrot-like and soulless, so far as acting was concerned, but it was a revelation of the boy's determination and of his really remarkable quickness in acquiring English.

When he came to visit me, I soon discovered he was profoundly miserable about something, and presently he confided his trouble to me, and in a passionate outburst of sorrow and indignation he cried: "If only my father would speak one little word for me, every stage-door would fly open like magic; but no! but no! Ah, you see, Madame Clara, he is so great! My father he is afraid my efforts might injure him—but, surely, he is too secure for that. His father was an actor before him and esteemed great, but he did not break his son's heart by denying him the privilege to follow his bent and act. If I could only get a start—then I know my father would accept the situation and give me his

blessing too, but"—his eyes filled, he dropped his head on the back of the chair he sat sidewise in—"but no one will give me a chance—no one at all!"

He was utterly disheartened, but in that outburst I had seen the potential actor, and, laying my hand on his thick up-curling black hair, I said: "My lad, I will give you a chance—for no man born to the name of Salvini can help acting!"

If the portals of heaven had opened before him, I do not believe his face would have been more radiant. "You must wait a little," I said, "until I can see your chance—but I'll find it, never fear," and then he paralysed me by joyously crying: "Wait! oh, madame! will I not wait till the hell freeze over!" Then, at sight of my face, he hurried on: "Have I not got it right, then? *You* say it!" that being his constant request to people about him: "*You* say it!" But I declined on the grounds of propriety, and then, with a black frown, Salvini remarked he would pull one man's nose who taught him that.

No wonder he learned English quickly, for he was ever on the alert—no strange word escaped him, no unusual term. He would say it over and over till he met a friend, and then demand its meaning. One day he came to me with a very troubled face. "Madame," he said, "please tell me why shall a man, like me, like any man, be a 'blue-nose'?"

"A what?" I asked.

"A 'blue-nose.'" So he was called in the restau-

rant, but he seemed not offended about it. "I have looked in my books; I can't find any disease of that name."

With ill-suppressed laughter I asked: "Do you know Nova Scotia and Newfoundland?"

"I hear the laugh in your voice," he said, then added: "Yes, I know both these places."

"They are very cold and foggy and wet," I explained.

But with brightening eyes he caught up the sentence and continued: "And the people have blue noses, eh? Ha! ha! Excuse me, then, but is a 'milk-sop' a man from some State or some county too?"

It was hardly possible to meet him without having a word or a term offered thus for explanation.

Mr. Palmer thought me rather rash when I proposed to let Salvini play *George du Hamel* in "l'Article 47," but, while the matter was still in the air, a small incident occurred that strengthened me in my conviction that the boy could act, and could also triumph over all linguistic obstacles. A committee of policemen from Yonkers had entreated me to do something to assist the widow of a brother officer. The case was very distressing, and I had promised to arrange a little entertainment for them. It was to take place in Yonkers, and, while my husband and I discussed the programme, he suddenly said: "Why not ask Salvini to recite something? He is warm-hearted and generous, his name would please the people, and it would give him a chance to

speak English before an audience that would be kinder and less critical than the city audience would be."

The idea was good, and, acting upon it, I spoke to Salvini. He was eager to give his help to my plan, and when Mr. Harriott read "The Charge of the Light Brigade" to him, the boy could scarcely contain himself for delight. He seized the book and began on the instant to study the lines, while Mr. Harriott at once introduced his name to its first programme.

At tea some one used the word "clap-trap." "What's that?" quickly demanded the student in our midst. "'Clap-trap'—'clap' is so (he struck his hands together); 'trap' is for rats—what is then 'clap-trap'?"

"It is a vulgar or unworthy bid for applause," I explained.

"Bah!" he contemptuously exclaimed. "I know him—that cheap actor who plays at the gallery. He is then in English a 'clap-trapper,' is he not?"

The night arrived, and with it a perfect deluge of rain. I had not let the poor fellow know how much depended upon his success or failure that evening, and when I saw his white face and felt the icy touch of his fingers, I was glad of my silence. When he went over his lines before Mr. Harriott he was quite perfect, but he was well in the clutches of true stage-fright. Once, as we waited for the opening of the carriage door, he closed his eyes a moment and murmured: "Ah, I am sick with the scare!" and I

answered: "That's because you're an actor born, my boy!" and he pressed the folds of my evening cloak to his lips, saying: "But you are good to say that! I won't shame you—see now!"

Mr. Harriott, Salvini, and I—all three—recited, and some ladies sang very acceptably, but all my thought was for the Italian lad fretting up and down like a captive tiger—his hands tight clasped behind him, his head bowed, and his lips moving, moving, moving. He was in evening dress, and looked well and at ease in it. He was not like his father either in feature or colour. Alessandro's was the ideal Roman head; the very low, very wide brow, the up-curling thick black hair, the strong, level eyebrows, the dark brown eyes, the colourless, ivory-white features, were distinctly foreign.

At last he was unleashed, and with a bound he was on the scrap of a stage, and his high, clear "For-w-a-r-d! the Light Brigade!" must surely have been heard down in Broadway. It really was a clever bit of work, a trifle too florid; but that was the result of nervousness. The instinct of the actor was twice plainly shown—once, when in making a mistake, instead of stammering or going back to correct his error, he swiftly "jumped" the faulty lines, and dashed on securely with the others; and again, when at the close he read with much feeling the words:

"Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!"

standing, as if looking into an open grave, he plucked the white flower from his coat and cast it down, a bit of business that caught the fancy of the house instantly. While the people maltreated damp umbrellas and kicked out their gum shoes in giving him a recall he was clutching his hair and wildly protesting to me: "Madame Clara, I have never meant that for a clap-trap! Never! *Never!* Just it came to me that moment to throw the flower to the dead! Think me a fool—but not—oh, please not, a clap-trapper!"

"Go on! Go on! and take your call!" I cried, pushing him before me. "No one thought of clap-trap! The business was quite artistic! *Will you go on?*"

And when all was over and Mr. Harriott heartily congratulated him, he looked fixedly a moment in his host's face, then, convinced of his sincerity, he gave a shout of joy and hugged himself, whirling around and indulging in all the antics of a schoolboy at recess, and crying: "Ah, but I am happy—happy to my very dregs!"

"Your what?" I gasped.

"My dregs!" he repeated. "Happy down to my heart's very dregs! Why, is not that right? Do I make another mistake?" he asked disappointedly. And not wishing to see a cloud over his joyous face, I answered him that his expression was only a trifle unusual, and through the pouring rain we drove gaily home, and Alessandro Salvini had made a first appearance in English, in a mere village hall, before

a moist and uncomfortable audience, that was just beginning to steam beneath the warmth of the lamps, when the curtain was mercifully lowered—yet after it I could safely claim for the boy stage presence, good voice, clear delivery, much self-control, and a true artistic temperament that shrank from banalities and tricky devices. Could and did—and Mr. Palmer listened patiently enough, but with just that faint smile of disapproval that is so much more disheartening than violent opposition.

"There!" I cried at last; "I've said everything I can think of!"

"Well, I do not believe you've missed anything," he replied, with a sorrowful conviction that made me realise suddenly how much of his time I was taking, and I rose hastily to retire, when he motioned me back with the words: "We have given a great deal of thought to young Mr. Salvini; now let us give a little thought to Miss Morris. I quite agree with you that Salvini will make an admirable 'George'—if he can hold on to the language; but think of those two trying situations—think of the utter ruin and disaster he may bring upon the play." He leaned forward and touched my hand. "What would Miss Morris do if George went quite to pieces in the mad act?" he asked warningly.

"Commit murder in her heart, to begin with, and then—oh, well! go mad a bit earlier than usual, get him off the stage somehow, and play the game out with a lone hand."

I jested and never dreamed that for one laughing

moment I spoke with the lips of prophecy. Mr. Palmer laughed a little, quoted "wilful woman," etc., and scribbled Alessandro Salvini's name on the cast list for "l'Article 47." To this day I am thankful that he never had reason to regret making that concession.

Rehearsals went forward. Salvini only read his part for one day; the second he was perfect in his lines, and then began his struggle with accent, intonation, and the "business" of the play, which was intricate and not easy to remember; and, alas, the current of his true love for the drama was not to run quite smoothly; an irritating obstacle appeared in the small person of Mr. Cazauran, who, for reasons known only to himself, bitterly opposed the admission of Salvini to the cast. He had absolutely no interest in the play, yet he fought desperately to keep the "foreigner," as he called him, out. Mr. Cazauran, who himself came from France, had a stinging and sarcastic tongue, and was given to sudden violent dislikes, which were very apt to be decidedly active. So, now, having loudly proclaimed the certain failure of "this son of his father," as he contemptuously termed the boy, he established a system of petty annoyances that would have angered and distressed any carefully rehearsing actor, but in the case of this stranger, nervous, sensitive, excitable, struggling with a strange language for his artistic life, it was in a fair way to rout all his faculties and realise the prophecy of failure. At first, when Mr. Cazauran ensconced himself in the chair just beneath

the left box, watching and listening intently, we all supposed it was for the moment's curiosity, for the scene, possibly the act, but—but he was *always* there, always the piercing little eyes watched for some *gaucherie* in George; the eager ears strained to catch first the wrong inflection, the misplaced emphasis. The shrug that ran the gamut of amused surprise, stricken amazement, pitying horror at such hopeless blundering, kept his Gallic shoulders busy, and as the days went by Salvini found himself speaking his speeches against a running fire of sharp witticisms, cutting comments, burlesque compliments, and faint, cackling laughter that lost nothing of their power to torment through being *sotto voce.*

Why was such a thing permitted? Because Mr. Palmer was engaged elsewhere. I was directing my part of the rehearsals under his stage-manager, who was greatly lacking in that quality known in the West as *sand* and in the East as *backbone,* and who was afraid of offending Mr. Cazauran by checking him. For some time Salvini had borne it all with commendable dignity and self-control, though he had said to me once with dilating eyes: "Mon Dieu, madame! will he do that thing at night? If—if I see him sitting in that chair there, I shall be paralysed and just stand and wait for him to cackle and crow and shrug." Then I knew the lad's nerves were going, under the strain of study, work, and worry.

The opening of the engagement was but two days off when he met me one morning, white-faced,

heavy-eyed, and, throwing his hands out helplessly, said briefly: "It is all over, madame—I cannot do it—I know now!"

For one moment hot anger possessed me; then the sight of his tragic young face touched my heart, and I said: "You have worked too hard—you are unstrung. You must take a quiet drive to-day and you and I will rehearse at home afterward."

"No, madame," he replied mournfully; "it is not overwork—my nerve strings are all right! It is not that I am coward or that I am ungrateful, but, madame, neither you nor I, nor anyone else, can stand against the *evil eye!*" I did not laugh; the thing was too serious. I knew that argument, ridicule, entreaty would be vain. This man shared with thousands of his countrymen a fixed belief in the malignant power of the evil eye, and I knew well the strength of a true belief. If it be given to blind chance or luck, to omens, amulet, and charm—we call it superstition; if to the church and its divine founder we call it religion, but in either case it is faith and a power, and all I could do was to stare helplessly and say to myself over and over: "What can I do? only two days—what *can* I do?"

He broke the silence with the remorseful words: "I am so sorry for you, Madame Clara—for the trouble I give. Had I only known I would have retired at once, but you know I have try to avoid that small man. How I have try to be deaf and blind and take no notice, as you have told me to do; but when I meet his eye, full just now, I have come

cold, cold like ice, right here"—he pressed his hand to his breast—"and then that creep in the hair, and I know, right away quick I understand. And he know I know, and he cackle his little laugh, and he think, oh, only two days and I have you! But, at least, he shall not have me before the public. But now I am quite ruin! for no theatre in America will ever open for me after this!"

And still I stood there thinking: "What can I do? Only two days—what can I do?"

A dull red came into the lad's troubled face. "Madame thinks I am coward—am too scare—that I—I make a backdown?" His eyes gave a flash. "Madame does not believe that the evil eye exist?"

"Oh, y—yes," I answered slowly, "I believe it exists—even one of the blood royal of Italy is said to be so afflicted; though in his case the evil influence is exerted unwillingly, unconsciously."

"Y—yes! yes! madame, one of our royal dukes —ah! you do understand!" and his eyes brightened, his eager, alert manner returned to him, and I caught my cue. Since I could not oppose him, why not humour him? And right there a remembrance flashed into my mind of the Neapolitan coral charm, worn for protection against the evil eye. Could I deceive him into acting? It was not an agreeable thing to do, but it was for his own good as well as mine. For the only time in my life I subscribed to the belief that the end justified the means, and, assuming a rather doubting expression, I asked: "The

coral amulet of Naples—it would be of no use, I suppose?"

He clasped his hands. "But, Madame Clara, we are in New York—we cannot beg, steal, or borrow such a coral here!"

"Don't be so sure," I answered. "I own many odds and ends—a scarab, an Arab charm, and, in a wee bag of chamois-skin, a something that to my eyes looks like a long tooth of pink coral, pierced to allow a thread."

"Mon Dieu!" cried the gifted and sorely tried youth. "Had I but that! Oh, we should see!"

"Very well," I answered; "you shall have it—but only here in the theatre, please. You will return it to me after the performance."

"Certainly, madame! Ah, but I am happy now again!" He rehearsed admirably, for it happened that Mr. Palmer required the services of the foe that morning, and next day, with an anxious heart, I came with my tiny chamois bag, and retiring to the depths of a dusky, dark entrance, I mysteriously opened it, just a wee, wee bit, so that Alessandro could catch a gleam of the coral, and then drew it closed again, passed it to his eager hand, and, sick with fear, lest he open it and find it but a slender ear-ring of coral, I returned to the stage and began my morning work.

Ah! the wonder of faith! In vain the little, bitter man's sneers and gibes and pretended amusements! Salvini, bright-eyed, hopeful, smiling, eager, spoke out clearly, confidently, and acted as only a foreigner

can act in the daylight. And all this happy assurance because of the wee bit of coral on his breast. Dear boy! I wonder if he would have forgiven me my deception had he discovered it?

The first night was over at last. He had done remarkably well, though his accent had gone quite wild in the mad act. That was his only fault. The people liked him beyond a doubt, and were very patient—the American public is ever most beautifully courteous in such matters. He came to my room and kissed my hands and, with shining eyes, exclaimed: "Such a letter I shall write to my father this night." He threw back his head and laughed heartily. "I shall sign myself his 'actor son.' Then, if he scold me, I—I"—he pulled a grave face—"I shall write him one very long letter in English. A-a-ah! that will punish him; for, madame, great as my father is, he simply cannot learn English—and, little as I am, I can—can't I, madame?"

A very charming boy was young Alessandro Salvini, and yet, the second week of the engagement, he one night brought the play to grief and me to shame and mortification—for to give way to passion always causes me the deepest humiliation afterward. My natural temper being quick and hot to fierceness, circumstances from my very infancy demanded of me perfect docility or my room instead of my company. I had learned submission before I had grown steady on my legs, and on obedience hung all the law and the prophets of my dreary life. Willing obedience to my mother, forced obedience to peo-

ple en masse, respectful obedience to employers. Naturally, then, I attained to considerable self-control, and, loving my kind heartily, I found myself rated in theatres as an amiable woman. Exacting about "business," but amiable, and the more unworthy I knew myself to be the more I prized the reputation that this protégé of mine placed in such jeopardy.

The play, judged merely from the physical standpoint, was very trying and demanded every particle of my strength. It was growing old and so familiar to me that it required all my imagination to force me into the reckless, primitive nature whose love and hate were alike implacable; and, when I had cast all restraint, all self-control, as far away as possible for artistic reasons, they, alas, could not be instantly recalled for personal reasons. We had reached the point where with narrowing eyes and frothing lips *Cora* suddenly ceased rocking to and fro and began her first, her only stammering plea for "pity," for "pardon!" A plea that *George* was to hear in silence—in dead, complete silence, without a movement, save when he averts his face at the close of her wild rush of words that stumbled over each other —then she, the untamed, the unconquerable, slowly, with absolute surrender in every line of her body, falls upon her knees and holds pleading arms out to him, saying simply: "Forgive me?" He never moves. "Please!" she entreats, low, like a punished child. He never moves. "You will not pity me?" Slowly, silently, he turns his contemptuous face away from her. "You will not even look at me?" A

mortal anguish shakes her, her wild eyes rove aimlessly about, then, in one only attempt at womanly dignity, she rises slowly, stretches out her arm, pointing to the door, and says: "Go! Oh, you are free; you need never look upon my face again!" He starts silently to retire, when she falls in a huddled heap in the chair with the anguished cry: "Yet I suffer! God! Oh, God! how I suffer!" Two minutes later he denounces her as mad, and the partition that separates reason from madness goes down with a crash that leaves *Cora* a raging, gibbering maniac.

The trouble began with a double negative from Salvini that caused a titter among the thoughtless actors in the scene. Wounded, he let go mentally of his part long enough to cast a reproach or two upon the actors, missed a cue in doing it, was seized with a trembling, permitted himself to think in Italian, and then found himself standing helplessly before the concentrated rage, the glaring eyes, and dilating nostrils of the amiable woman who had helped him to the stage.

Wildly he spoke the wrong line. "Be silent!" hissed *Cora*. "For heaven's sake, keep still if you can," and resumed her pitiful pleading: "You will not pity me?" she moaned. (Good heavens! he was coming toward her!) "Keep still! Keep still!" she fiercely commanded in a whisper; then aloud: "You will not even look at me?" (and that terror-stricken boy crept over to *Cora* and tenderly tried to lift her to her feet, murmuring with wet eyes:

"Pardon! oh, pardon!") and, with a shriek of genuine frenzy, a cry rang through the theatre, unknown in that play before: "I could kill! I could kill! Take him away! Don't touch me! Jean! Jacques!" (to imaginary servants) "Show monsieur to the door?" The prompter was running and crying: "Come off! Come off!"

Salvini dimly remembered he had to denounce *Cora*. He hesitated—she bit her lips until the blood offended her, and unconsciously tore into ribbons the veil that bandaged her scarred face.

Again that shriek rose to the very roof: "I'll kill! I'll kill! Go—go—go!"

A hand appeared between the curtains of the gambling rooms and caught his arm and drew him away. As his white face disappeared he said aghast: "Mon Dieu! she's gone quite mad! and I did it!"

The words, the manner, were inspired. Though the boy meant *I* was mad, the words fitted into the play so well that only old-timers guessed the awful havoc he had worked in the act. Small wonder the doctor asked for me two overtures after that act—that I had to finish alone, cutting out a few words George should have spoken at the end. Shame? No one could have sounded the depths of shame I knew.

But the shame: who could sound the depths of my deep shame as with swift apologies to all concerned I hurriedly sought the refuge of my dressing-room? "Where is Salvini?" I asked presently, and people looked at one another and laughed. Later I said again, "Where's Salvini?" for he generally turned

aside on his way out of the theatre to tap at my door and call a gay "Good-night, Madame!" or wish me better health for the next day, as the occasion might suggest. But to-night!

"Where's Salvini?" repeated the gasman; "why he bolted! Honestly, Miss Morris, he left the building, make-up and all, just as you drove him off the stage!"

"Oh!" I groaned, and over me swept the wave of shame again. Next night my husband met the young actor by chance, who instantly flung up his hands crying: "Oh! was it not awful? I—*I* to have done that thing—to have kill that act?" Mr. Harriott laughed as he said: "You had a happy escape last night, for, for a few moments, your Madame Clara certainly wanted to kill you," and was astonished by the lad's answering with perfect seriousness: "As she had the right! So would my father do, if someone spoiled his great scene—he would kill with his bare hands! Last night I get quite crazy, by the head—I do all wrong—*all* until I kill the play—then she want to kill me—and that's why I run away! Oh, yes! I am quite wise—sometimes!"

And though that speech filled others with unqualified amusement, his calm justification of my wild conduct was an actual balm to my wounded self-respect, and ever after we played on in peace and amity.

Our ways parted at the close of that engagement. Now and again we met briefly, and I had the oppor-

tunity of congratulating him upon his wonderful advance in his beloved profession. His chiefest pride seemed to be that he had won his father's approval and his warm interest in his work. But his ambition soared high—high. Never did I see him that he was not tremblingly aspiring to play some new part. He used actually to change colour when he spoke of *Romeo,* so intense were his longings and his fears; and when at last he dared it—what an ideal! Testy —tempestuous—tender—" his shape," " his love," " his wit," did truly make him the " fond madman " old *Laurence* chided. He did careful as well as brilliant work. It was not all dash and instinct with him; he could delve, could weigh and measure, and give good reason for his action. When it came to " character " work, such as the grave and stolid German, the strict man of business, in " Fromont and Risler," an astonishing performance came from the impetuous and romantic young Italian.

There can be no doubt that the early death of Alessandro Salvini meant loss to the American stage, serious loss. There was a largeness of promise for his future that made many thoughtful lovers of the drama turn hopeful eyes toward him, for, beneath the dash and sparkle were energy, determination, and tenacity.

Already he had turned from veiled Folly's secret lure and smile to openly pursue the chosen one whose flight led straight to the church's open doors. Again he was in opposition to his great father's wishes, who disapproved of a professional marriage; yet

when, the season ended, Alessandro returned to Italy, the divinely beautiful land of his birth, his bride was greeted—how? Greeted just as you would have Tommaso Salvini—Italian gentleman and first actor of his time—greet her, the strange foreign wife of that beloved hot-headed son of his. Nor was his gracious cordiality mere propriety, mere habitual native hospitality. For when the day came for flight, and the returning pair faced toward America, Signor Salvini's new daughter looked not unlike some idol, glittering with votive offerings—so be-ringed, ear-ringed, watched, locketed, chained, braceleted was she by the generosity of the famous man, who thus tried to express the esteem and affection he felt for the woman his son had chosen. And Alessandro whispered while in his father's arms: "I will never oppose your will again, papa! Whatever you ask, that will I do—truly, truly! Ah! do not laugh—I mean it!"

And yet how short was the time till the great actor implored in vain that son to live—just to live—to live! But habit was strong; Alessandro had opposed his adoring father's wishes so often, and he had always become quite reconciled. Perhaps even now—he smiled lovingly into his pleading eyes, but he did not live.

XX

FROM SAND-DUNE TO MOUNTAIN-TOP

ONE of the chief products of the sandy soil of San Francisco is the wily, strategic, acrobatic flea—I might say the democratic flea, since all men taste alike to him and the clerk in the boarding-house hall bedroom responding to the familiar nip knows he is rubbing no whit harder than is the millionaire up on Nob Hill, while if the latter's wife in shop or show-room betrays an inclination to lean against the sharp edge of a door, any San Franciscan present will instantly turn away and thus gallantly give the lady her chance to "bless the Duke of Argyle" in peace.

These things you come to understand in the course of time, but just at first the stranger is prone to laugh as at fairy tales when told of wedding parties held up by these small, spry highwaymen; of the best man frantically digging with one patent-leather at the tormented calf of the other leg; of the minister, who having been flea-welted from his heels up, could bear no more, and so reached over his shoulder and savagely scratched his back with his prayer-book. But wait, your time will come as mine did and then you will bless the San Francisco gentleman for his quick perception of your torture, for his silent, swift screening of you, while you grasp your apparel with both hands and with one comprehensive movement, twist

everything half-around and back again, thus bringing confusion and sometimes dislodgement to your enemy.

I had played my engagement out at the California Theatre and had gone down to Passo de Robles for rest and for the waters of that wonderful spring, boiling up hot, translucent, green as emeralds liquified, but smelling to Heaven and tasting of the other place. But my stay was brief at the hotel, which with spreading wings sat hen-like ready to shelter a whole brood of little chick-like cottages scattered about it. The Improvement Company had just, at great expense, placed a hitching-post in front of my cottage, where the riding-horses could be left tied, that being more agreeable to me than the young Mexican lads' primitive habit of peering into my bedroom window to see if I were dressed yet.

I was no sooner well settled than the first flake of a telegraphic snowstorm fell. They were in trouble at the theatre in San Francisco, and wanted me back —oh, my! Their announced attraction had failed them; a local actress, a great favourite, who often played special engagements with them and to whom they had naturally turned in their difficulty, was seriously ill. I was therefore their only hope. Would I not come back and save them from closing for several nights?—a fatal thing to do right in the heart of the season?

I was sympathetic in ten words, concluding with "Have no play," and went out to ride.

They were frantic, entreating in twenty words, and

in many more informed me that the company was fairly up in one play, which could be done in two rehearsals—Sunday night and Monday morning—if only I would undertake to study the leading part, *Jane Shore*. Gracious Heavens! I nearly fell out of of my saddle as I read. Were they crazy? That old, old, stilted, blank-verse, melancholy play? And *Jane* was longer than the moral law; and where were the dresses to come from? I became satirical. I could not resist the impulse. I telegraphed: "Don't hesitate—if you don't see what you want, just ask for it."

But they were not to be disturbed by a little thing like that. The mail brought me a copy of "Jane Shore," and wires still hummed with entreaties. My percentage was to be increased, while their gratitude would be eternal.

I answered "*Jane* has no clothes"—They responded: "Dead loads of clothes here. Wardrobe woman at your service to correct loaned costumes. Come for Heaven's sake!"

Alas, the wet handkerchief went to my forehead, my maid and husband packed and brewed coffee to keep me awake, while I strove to make the acquaintance of the antiquated *Jane;* and next day I abandoned my holiday and turned my face toward the great city on the sand—and work!

Seated by the side of the "woman-hating" driver I felt my very soul expand with pride when he passed me the reins and allowed me to guide the four slamming big horses. I had gone down with this same

driver, who had at first glared at me and privately had sworn fire and flame at having " a damn cackling woman " on the box with him. But when, after sitting one whole afternoon in dead silence at his side, I had suddenly informed him that his " nigh leader " had picked up a stone, he spoke surprisedly of my knowing enough to see that quicker than he could. Then next morning at dawn, with a cry of delight, I had grasped his arm and pointed to a gaunt, brooding, almost tragic shape outlined high against the shell-pink sky, he excitedly answered: " A bald eagle, by—thunder! Say, that's only the second one I've ever seen in these 'ere mountains! Well, by—— (some more things) you use your eyes more than your tongue! "

And from that out we were on such friendly terms that when I made my final bear-like backward descent from the coach, he told me I must surely return with him: " But," I laughed in answer, " suppose some man is ahead of me and has the box-seat? "

" Why," replied my red-shirted friend, " if he's a gentleman he'll climb right out, and if he isn't, I'll h'ist him out—savvy! eh? " He wagged a grimy forefinger before my face, adding emphatically: " You'll ride on the box, and you'll hold the reins, and you may turn the whole damn'd outfit over if you want ter. I'm talking now—so you tell your pardner there, that you're to go back with me! So long,—git up there, will yer! "

And now I was going back and I was driving with the great reins cutting my thin gloves into ribbons

and incidentally blistering my palms, while pride kept me from giving them up as long as he trusted me with them.

Then suddenly there came a burning sting in my side accompanied by a rapidly spreading itchiness of such exquisite intensity of torment as I had never dreamed of before. I gave a little "Oh!" and tried to rub my side with my elbow. Another sting—I writhed in misery! The driver had just removed the handle of his whip from between his shoulder blades, where he had been churning it up and down, apparently to his great comfort; and turning comprehending eyes upon me, he inquired briefly: "Fleas?" Then taking the reins, he added with perfect calmness and simplicity: "If they're about your stocking, Miss Clara, I'll hitch around a bit and you can go for 'em?"

One indignant glance I flashed at him only to meet such honest and sympathetic eyes that wild merriment seized upon me and I laughed so long and so hard that the driver gazed and gazed and at last commented, half-sullenly: "Well, I never see anyone afore able ter laugh at fleas! I've laughed with a shot through my shoulder, when I stood off stage robbers that were trying to hold up the old shebang—but laughing at fleas is too many for me!" Then so contagious is real tear-wringing merriment, he too began to rumble forth an accompanying laughter, jolly and good to hear out there in the pale green loneliness, under the mighty arch of blue. Presently he drew the back of his hand across his eyes and declared he

hadn't laughed so much since the last time his mother had tried to lick him, when her slipper flew out of her hand and went down the well, and she had to pay him to fish it out again!

Then there was an unpleasantly full and rapidly moving stream to ford, and the driver warned me to hold tight for fear some sudden lurch might throw me off. The whip hissed harmlessly over the four horses, who with ears laid back plunged into the water and amid alternate curses and endearments slipped and stumbled over the stony bottom. Then, coming out on the sand, strained to four level lines of backs with every muscle made visible in the desperate effort to keep the coach from stalling in the clutching sand. Tears were running down my cheeks when we came out upon solid earth again and when I laid my hand on the driver's and looked beseechingly at him, he said: "All right—hola! whoa Jim! whoa boys!" and as they stood panting, leaning their shoulders against one another, he added: "That damn'd sand pull takes more than ten miles of travel out of them horses! Say, after this, I'll give 'em this breathin' spell—for you—every time—sure! I'm square—and that stands, Miss Morris!"

A promise that made my heart rejoice, and several years afterward, meeting John McCullough, he asked me if I remembered the "woman-hating" stage driver. I said that I did—"Well," he went on, "he returns the compliment, for there's a spot on the road where he gives his team, what he calls "the Morris breather."

My return to the theatre was hailed with joy, my reception was touching in the extreme—for you see no man can be indifferent to the person who helps to defend his pocketbook. I drove those wrong-end-to lines of Rowe's composing into my memory by main force, shocked everyone by expressing my strong preference for the treacherous *Alicia,* as an acting part, rather than the lachrymose *Jane;* borrowed one gown, had the last garment, known to the old-time chronicler as a "white shift," made and with the aid of a velvet robe I chanced to have with me, provided *Jane* with a sort of wardrobe.

Just to show how hard it is to balk an actress of her will when she really thinks she requires a certain material for a stage costume, let me tell you about that same "white shift." At that time the only crape known to our commerce was the stiff black horror used for mourning gowns and the exquisite but rare and oh, how costly, white china crape. The crinkly softness of this last was delightfully effective for stage use, and all these craped weaves of wool and cotton were yet unknown. *Jane Shore,* barefooted, taper in hand, makes, according to her sentence, shameful public penance; her nudity concealed by one sole garment, a chemise, and that all stained by mud and filth flung by the mob.

Crape—my soul cried out for the crinkly clinging of crape, for this sole garment of shame and woe! I sighed at the thought of deliberately soiling the lovely fabric; sighed again at the heavy cost for one week of wear, and then found I could not obtain it—not

until the coming in of the City of Something from China; and two days only we had to work in, remember. Straightway I experimented with a rag in a bowl of water, and then obtained soft, thin, unbleached cotton—a beautiful night-white that—got many yards and had the whole soaked in water, then wrung tight as man's hands could wring it, and leaving it in that hard twist, had it dried rapidly by furnace heat, then unrolled and shook out to find a creamy, crinkly, clinging material that might joy the eye of any artist; and everyone rejoiced with me and cried "Glory to Allah!"

But the "creation," to quote the great Worth's favourite expression, was not complete, even after it had been "run up" into a sort of shapeless, graceful trail. All actors know the utter hopelessness of trying to manufacture rags—it can't be done. No wonder that even the stout-hearted, the stately Cushman, wept true womanly tears, when by carelessness or theft some of her precious *Meg Merrilies* rags, worn for twenty years, were lost. And one actor, that I remember, advertised and later on paid for an entire "made to order" suit of clothes, for the return of the ragged coat and trousers of his part. If you doubt it—try it yourself. A skirt is the easiest article to experiment on, but when you have done your very best you will have to acknowledge a failure. The worn, frayed, dismally-faded look is absent, and the tears are too violent and generally unexplainable. Then a soiled garment is even harder to manage. Rags you can buy, if you have a little tact as well as

money—but, dear Heaven! you don't want to buy dirt!

A friend experimented on a white skirt for me on this occasion, but the result was artificial in the extreme—splotches of dirt on a perfectly clean surface. I read again carefully the speech wherein *Jane's* appearance is described: her meekness, her exhaustion, her footsteps all marked with blood—the need of raiment to wrap her shivering bosom from the weather. How on her shoulders, carelessly confused, with loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung; and the mob, hooting and railing and with villainous hands gathering the filth from out the common ways to hurl upon her.

There was our cue. I gave my spotless gown of penance to the chambermaid, begging her to dust the tables, chairs and chiffonieres with it that day and at night I had my friend don it and stand in the stage door, while the property-man literally followed the poet's words and flung dirt, letting it strike where it would. Then a few tufts of grass crushed against the hem and about the knees gave the greenish stains of falls upon earth, when she had "scaped the flinty pavements for a time." And with a faint smear or two of blood in front communicated from the wounded feet, I had at last as sad, as sorrowful, as shamed a garment as ever "sinful woman starved and dee'd in." Actresses the world over are full of inventiveness, of adaptability, of power to lightly and swiftly skip around the obstacle they cannot push aside. Of course the craping of the cotton was a

very simple device which had probably been practised by many another actress prompted thereto by Mama Necessity. But other inventions of mine are more original, more worthy of attention and some day when you have time and are graciously inclined I will present them for your consideration, in company with the best effort of a brother actor, who because of it was known to fame as Mr. Tackhammer Thomas, and whose loving friends when inquiring about the health of his offspring, invariably asked after his Little Tacks, and told him never to—but oh, I beg your pardon!

"Jane Shore" was announced in three-story red type and the management, hoping doubtless to arouse in the public a certain spirit of clemency and forbearance toward the hurried and harried, whose work might well prove below the usual standard, had given to the press the story of the abandoned holiday, the gorging of the blank verse part and my reappearance after but two rehearsals. The story caught the fancy of the people, they thought they saw a touch of good-fellowship in it and straightway they enthused. They liked the hustle of this manager; they raved over the generosity of the star's ready return and my mild reminder that my generosity was well paid for did not in the least affect them. Of course it was all exaggerated, even absurd, but, good Heaven, look at the sunshine out there! And the climate!

Imagine my feelings if you can, after climbing dejectedly onto my high stilts ready to wade before a

light house through the gross, dull, tedious, old play, to go on instead to a house full of smiling, bright-eyed people, who greeted and joyously welcomed, until pleased surprise changed to a sort of humility, a shamed delight, that brought my head low upon my breast and left me for the moment helpless, confused and unable to recall one line of the prolix and prosy *Jane*. Fortunately *Belmour* (Harry Edwards) had to speak first and his word brought my memory back to me and from a sense of mischief—which was artistically simply unpardonable—I spoke my opening line directly at the audience, instead of to my companion:

> *"My gentle neighbour, your good wishes still*
> *Pursue my helpless fortunes . . ."*

And the words were scarcely over my lips before a burst of applause and laughter answered me delightedly. You see it takes more even than Rowe's verse to dull the perception of our audiences.

We were going on famously and with astonishing smoothness, all things considered, for the cast was an exceptionally strong one and we had been working together for the past month, and that tells greatly in such an emergency, and I had got out of my borrowed gown, also that gross and Pecksniffian scene with *Hastings* was happily behind me, and my bosom's lord was sitting quite lightly on his throne, when I began to wonder at the effect my second costume was having upon the actors. Some raised their

hands above their heads in mock horror, some smirked and bowed and kissed their hands at my train and murmured: "Thanks, so much."

It was handsome—I knew that. It was fairly correct—of ruby velvet, square-necked, tight inner sleeves, long hanging outer sleeves and immense train trimmed all around with broad bands of fine, long-haired fur—yet glee, unmistakable, malicious glee danced in every eye that fell upon that gown.

As I stood ready to go on to the scene with *Gloster,* the head-carpenter grinned and said: "Well, Miss Morris, you ain't lacking in no nerve anyway," and to my amazed look answered: "That's a fine dress, but by the great Bonanza! I'd rather you'd wear it than me though—unless I'd just had my hide chemically treated!"

And then my cue came and as with calm dignity I swept on to face my dread foe I saw standing in the opposite entrance, one known to us all as "The first fiend." He was consulting an enormous silver turnip of a watch, which had a white old face but no hands, and he said loudly enough for me to hear: "How long—let's see how long before——" and dear Heaven, it was not long! I was only in my second speech:

> *"Oh, that the busy world at least in this,*
> *Would take example from a wretch like me!"*

when I felt a burning sting, a spreading, penetrating itchiness that seemed to reach the very marrow of the

bones, and as by lightning flash I saw the joke about my dress, that fur meant fleas! With wide-flaring eyes and quivering nostrils I went on—when nip! again just beneath my shoulder blade! I writhed and twisted in positive torment. *Gloster* who saw and understood my suffering, stalked over to me and in august dignity secretly scratched my back—in the wrong place. Oh, never again! I vowed as beads of sweat came out upon my brow, *never!* would I jest at the local flea—for now the enemy was upon me! and verily he was smiting me hip and thigh! Disconcerted by such maddening itchiness, such astonishing rapacity, my memory tottered. I stammered as I surreptitiously rubbed here and clutched there, but was unaware that the house had guessed the cause of the starts and stops and choppy speeches. At last—oh, at long last—the scene was drawing to a close. Bitten almost from head to foot, eyes filled with tears of suffering, I flung myself upon my knees and passionately beginning the speech:

"Let me be branded for the public scorn!"

had reached the line:

"Ere I consent to teach my lips injustice!"

when again the burning twinge, the agonising itch, and glancing down, there upon the whiteness of my breast, his slim thighs hunched high like a grasshopper, sat the biggest, blackest, most warlike flea I

ever saw. I stopped in the middle of the word—I had no thought of witnesses—my finger tip flew to my moistening lips and like a flash descended upon and clutched my foe—while good and loud, the man at the kettle-drum cried, triumphantly: "She's got him!"

Shall I ever forget that mighty roar of laughter—then applause—then of laughter and applause! How it rolled and rumbled away only to burst forth again. Next day brought me a bunch of flowers accompanied by a fine-tooth comb, and this message: "For that long fur—from one who has suffered!"—while a round-robin of thanks from the company was found pinned to my red gown, that declared: "Every flea in the theatre has accepted your invitation and is camping in this fur, and so giving us a rest—thanks, dear friend!"

Long afterwards, in New York City, Miss Genevieve Ward was producing with spectacular effects "Jane Shore," and alas, in her magnificent velvets and furs she met full in the face one of our awful September hot waves—95 during the day—and at night the heat in the gaslit theatre was terrible. Numbers of people were removed quite overcome. Miss Ward showed a marvellous power of patient endurance. No fan even did she carry and though her face and throat and breast rained perspiration, not a movement or gesture betrayed her physical discomfort. I was stifling in a box, but for sweet courtesy's sake would not withdraw. Then an old gentleman, who had stared rather persistently at me through his great

glass, sent a card to the box on the back of which was scribbled: "Does *Jane Shore* always have such hard luck on first nights? It's 190 down here and no shade, and I protest this is worse than fleas—my homage!"

A laugh broke from my lips—I glanced downward and nodded slightly, when the white haired old man astonished those about him by rising, placing his hand over his heart and bowing to the breaking point. Of course on turning over the card I found the address was San Francisco.

Curiosity had prompted me to accept tempting offers to visit some of the principal mining centres on my way East—those strange, raw, rough-edged mountain cities where a bank or insurance building will rear its splendour of marble, of plate-glass, of electric lighting, of mahogany furnishings, side by side with a camper's tent. Where the fine hotel stands *dos-à-dos* with the clay-chinked log house of an early settler. Where a stately church or two tightly close their eyes all the week not to see the faro-bank, the opium-joint, the dance-hall and the saloon—who gaily *chassée* up to their very doors. Prairie schooners trail slowly through the streets where at night the inky shadows and strange swimming radiance of the arc-light terrify country horses and solemn swaying oxen. Where the erect, alert, perfectly dressed Eastern business man stands chatting with the countryman who seems all boot-tops and fur cap. Where the miner is by daylight conspicuous by his absence—being away

at his toil, and the prettiest and most promising of sights is the well-built, well-lighted schoolhouse, swarming with the burliest of little chaps and the rosiest of little maids. I was of course far from comfortable in the make-shift theatres, but the people interested me greatly. I had become too all mixed up geographically and was quite unaware that we were steadily climbing higher and higher, as we looped and circled and zig-zagged our way through the grim grandeur of the repellent Rockies; and one night I awakened from a horrid dream of suffocation, to find myself astonishingly short of breath and much puzzled by the loud thumping and curious antics of my heart—that now and then beat heavily in the locality I had supposed to be sacred to the stomach; and while I was still in the wonder of that, up it sprang into the hollow of my throat, fluttering irregularly and scaring me into a search for smelling salts. Next day I yawned and yawned and sighed and sighed and on our arrival, in walking about half a block to reach the waiting hack, I stopped outright and clutched my labouring chest. Some baggage- and hack-men standing by grinned broadly at me. Now I am so constituted that should a ravening wild animal grin at me I'd instantly respond without asking his intentions; therefore I smiled back, a trifle wonderingly at these men, and as my driver, with clumsy care assisted me into his ancient ark, he remarked: "It's pretty tough on a stranger, mum, I reckon just at first," and slammed the door.

"What was tough?" I asked myself and looked

out inquiringly. "If he means the steepness of the streets, why this is nothing to Seattle's terrifying grades."

By night, I suppose I had said to myself a hundred times: "Why, what is the matter with me?" Even my dog was unhappy and disturbed, rising and whirling around and around, trying a new position nearly every ten minutes. I was ashamed to speak of not being able to catch my breath. I thought the sighing and yawning meant perhaps indigestion, until in my dressing-room in attempting to hasten a little, my breathlessness frightened me. Sharply I threw open the door and outside I saw one of my ladies leaning against the wall, her eyes closed, her hand pressed to her side, an image of distress; and directly in front of me an actor dressed for his part stood in sullen patience wiping the trickling blood from his nose, and like a flash, as if in letters of fire, I seemed to see the words: "Leadville—10,200 feet above the sea-level." I recalled how a friend of mine, after a hemorrhage, had with blood still flowing from the nostrils been rushed to a lower level in a special car, in a frantic effort to save her life. It was this altitude then that made it "tough for strangers" just at first. "Oh!" I thought, "if Heaven will only grant me breath to get through this night's work, I shall have just sense enough to keep away from Leadville all the rest of my life!" But oh, there was so much play and so little breath! I had got through one act only and my condition seemed alarming. One of the stage hands came up to me and said wistfully: "Miss Morris, I

came from your city; will you shake hands with me, just for old New York's sake?"

"Yes," I answered, "willingly!"

As he held my fingers tightly, he went on: "I climbed over a fence last night and turned loose a captive hawk, they had there in misery, poor devil! If you could only have seen him rise out of that place! Holy smoke!" I said, "I wish I could fly like that, I'd just swoop down these damned mountains and whirl into the old City Hall Park in New York, and—good Lord, woman, don't strain and struggle so like that for breath or you'll burst a blood vessel! See here—breathe like this. I know you feel as if you'll die in a minute or two, but you won't if only you'll take it easier. Here—drop your arms limp beside you, and then catch lightly, quickly but lightly, at the air—see—like this." Two men passed between us carrying a table: "Well, the devil take your impudence!" cried my mentor. "Keep out of the way, can't you? I'm trying to help the star to breathe!" And the star suddenly proved she had breath enough for at least laughter. Again and again he warned me, entreatingly, profanely: "Don't struggle so damn'd hard—you'll do yourself a damage!"

And then at last the dreaded scene came. We had been playing "Camille" in the other mining towns, but thinking to lighten my work for a night or two, a German play, I loathed, had been put on and one act closed with the longest, most exhausting speech I ever had to deliver in a play. Standing between husband and mother-in-law, she sums up all the unhappiness

of her past, makes furious accusations and finally delivers a mad malediction and flings out of the house. I began—my breath came short and quick. I spoke more and more rapidly. My nostrils began to show dead white edges from extreme dilation. My mentor crowded into the prompt place and wildly shook head and hands at me. I gasped painfully and unhooked the bottom of my dress waist—a little relief came. I went on rapidly with rising voice, my hands clutching at my heart, and further opening my dress. The leading man edged closer to me and whispered: "For God's sake, go easy!" A sort of fury seized upon me—I could have struck him for his warning. I recklessly determined to give the speech as usual though I died for it! In just such senseless rages women have taken their foolish lives ere now. I flung wide my arms and began:

"May you sorrow through the days and agonise through the nights as I have done!"

I tried to moisten my parched lips and tore on through the endless speech. Then I began to falter—I couldn't breathe! Was I lost—had I failed when so near the end? I remembered vaguely the relief at opening my dress. Without a thought, save for breath—blessed breath!—I turned one moment, caught the top of my corset and with a violent twist and wrench unclasped it—then whirled about and like a very fury, cursed man and woman both—dashed the door open and fell headlong into someone's arms—as the curtain ran

down, and in my mentor's words: "Hell broke loose out in front!"

Water and spirits of ammonia stood me upon my feet directly, but mortal shame kept me from going before the curtain: "What will they think of me?" I wept as I drew my gown together with both hands.

"Think? think?" cried the head carpenter, "They'll think you're the grittiest thing that's struck this town for many a year! Why, they all know what you was unbucklin' your belt for—they used to do it themselves once! You go on out there, or there'll be a riot—sure's your born!"

And I went out and learned something of what the honest miner can do with his hands when he's not mining for lead, silver, or gold! One old chap, in a bearskin coat, stood up and beat the chair back with his soft felt hat, crying: "Bray-vo! Bray-vo!" while a little group of "our social leaders," perfectly coiffured, well wrapt in the soft splendour of rare furs, sat and dried their eyes on small rags of costly lace, and clapped their white-gloved hands, as fair to eyes, as sweet to scent as hot-house flowers—but so incongruously placed that I was not surprised when the gas-man remarked to the prompter: "Say, seein' them lovely women come here's kinder like havin' a pipe-dream, pard!" And the prompter took the penholder from between his lips to answer: "Yep, but it's just for such pretty, helpless things that men turn themselves into moles and go burrowing through the earth. No woman—no miner!"

The play was over and moving cautiously about I

had made ready for my car, when I was halted by my manager, who with a secret gesture that appealed for pardon, presented to me a Mr. ——, dear me, I can't recall the name, yet I do not weep. It is enough that I recall *him*—his feet of height, his rolling gait, his clothing of fine material, but suicidal cut, his long black cigar clenched by big square teeth at an angle of forty-five degrees, his habit of wearing hands, wrists and part of his arms in his trousers pockets, the unpleasantly bulging butt of his revolver—all failed to impress me pleasantly. He had the small black eye, with the red spark in it, that I cordially dislike; then too I am rarely addressed, in the house at least, by a man who keeps his hat on; and on this occasion I threw so much of my disgruntled soul into my amazed stare at that offending sombrero, that he took it off and held it in a beringed hand, while he affably addressed me thus:

"Well, you gathered in the town! Of course I knew you were a sure winner—could out-pace, out-trot anything on the track—er—I mean, I knew you were a bang-up actress—but you passed the limit to-night. And (holding out his hand) I want to tell you, that I'm damn'd glad to see you've got through alive—I am so!"

I gazed at him in astonishment: "Why, what do you mean?" I stammered.

"Mean just what I say. Of course I knew you were not strong and this here atmosphere has laid out quite a few strangers and—well, I hardly thought you could pull the show off—thought you'd back

down and pay me my loss rather than have something risky happen. I saw from the first things were going hard with you, and when you fired up and began gittin' in your fine work, I remembered the tenderfoot that came up here a week or so ago, and who got mad 'cause he thought himself cheated out of some shares he claimed, and he didn't really have breath enough to swear with; and though we told him he'd bust somethin', he wouldn't take the tip, but went right on, got red in the face, and suddenly, (snapping his fingers), there he was, and we had to send his remains down to his friends, just before you-all come up. So when I see you gasp and fight and let out a reef here and another one there to catch just a breath, I thought you was buckin' for busted blood vessels sure, and I'm pleased as punch that you've come out alive!"

In indignant tones, I said: "You believed then I ran considerable personal risk in acting up here?"

He nodded and winked as he ejaculated: "You bet!"

"Yet you never wrote one word to my manager of advice, of friendly warning—never suggested even a lighter play?"

He half closed one eye: "Oh, come now, Miss Morris," he said, drawing into sight a lot of coin and bills, "you know business is business!"

The insolent self-satisfaction of the man was so irritating, that I answered: "Yes—and I am so familiar with its methods that I feel compelled to tell you sir, this has not been 'business,' it has been a gam-

ble on your part! Good-night!" and for the life of me I could not put out my hand to him.

Down on the sidewalk some people waited, and while my husband struggled with the offended and obstinate hack-door, a slender, black-draped woman stepped up beside me and laid an ungloved hand upon my arm:

"Forgive me," she almost whispered, "but I must thank you—your presence here is like a breath from the old home life down by the Atlantic. But go away soon—get to a lower level! Such a scare as you gave me to-night! It was great acting, but I just clung to the chair and prayed and prayed for God to spare you from disaster!"

"Thank you," I said gratefully, and became conscious that the slender forefinger bore the badge of struggling poverty—all pricked and wounded, rough and darkened—and it called attention to the thin white hand and the loose, loose wedding ring.

"Come, dear!" said the summoning voice—but I halted long enough to drag off a glove and hold tight in mine the hand of the unknown woman, who starved on the mountain for the grey old Atlantic, and prayed to her God for the welfare of a stranger!

XXI

A MEMORY OF DION BOUCICAULT

I HAD acted in Dion Boucicault's plays ever since I had been in the ballet. I had heard of him, read of him, but I had never seen him until one night when Col. Donn Piatt, who was in the city in the interest of his Washington paper, came to my dressing-room to offer congratulations and to add further:

"I meant never again to repeat to you a compliment, knowing how sure a way it is to get into your black book as a suspected hypocrite, but just this once more I will take the risk. Dion Boucicault is in front,"—heaven! how my mental eye flew back over my work!—"and when you first came on the scene he started so violently as to attract the attention of several. 'Good heaven!' he exclaimed, and held his eyes closed a moment, then looked again and again exclaimed: 'Is this a reincarnation?' Suddenly he turned to me. 'You must see it,' he said. 'When you were an *attaché* of the legation at Paris, you must have done the theatres thoroughly, and don't you see who is moving, speaking, smiling there before you? Even the irregular teeth, the upward curl at the lip corner, of—Rose Chéri?' I

nearly sprang out of my chair, for he had traced and named the likeness that you know has tormented me for two years. You are wonderfully like her."

"Some one is knocking, Marie," and as Marie opened the door an imploring voice, with a laugh trembling through it, reached us, saying: "Couldn't I be coming in now too, Colonel? I want to make sure, my boy, whether it's Rose or Clara I'm seeing act." And then we were shaking hands and he, with a gurgle of malicious laughter, was saying: "Look at the girl blushing, Colonel dear! That ever I should live to see the like of that!"

"It's paint," I said.

"It's not," said he, "and you're more like Rose at short range than long."

"Oh!" I groaned, sorrowfully, glancing at the reflection in my glass. "Did she, too, have a high cheek-bone, dropping an oblique line swiftly to the chin? Did her short, straight nose end with the roundness of a cherry? Ah, the poor soul!"

"The poor nothing at all!" indignantly exclaimed Mr. Boucicault. "Let me tell you Rose Chéri was a Parisian favourite of the highest order, and an artist to her finger-tips."

"I know that, my dear sir, incredible as the statement may seem to you; but you did not honour me by saying my work resembled hers. That indeed would have been something to exult over. You said I looked astonishingly like her, and I expressed my sympathy for her."

"Well, your sympathy seems to me a thinly sugar-

coated ridicule, but of course you are quite innocent of satire."

"I have read and acted the plays of Dion Boucicault," I meekly answered.

"Oh, Colonel!" he laughed, "she's given her red lips just a touch of the blarney-stone!"

"Plain women are all supposed to have sharp tongues," I smiled.

"Yes, but they don't all have sharp wits—which reminds me, I'd like to know what you thought of Modjeska the other night. I saw you in the box at the *première*."

"I thought her a very remarkable actress. She has, I believe, given so much thought, study and polish to her work that her action seems impulse, her gestures accidental. Only a sister actress appreciates the cost of such naturalness as hers."

"You frowned often, though, let me tell you."

"That was when her English bothered me."

"Ah!" he went on, impatiently, throwing himself into the chair he had hitherto leaned upon. "It was bad—I was disappointed."

"Good heaven, man! Make some allowance for a first night! Her English was much improved when the passing of stage-fright had released her stiffened lips. I'd like to see you pass through such an ordeal. You have called me clever—oh, I know, because Mr. Daly told me so—but can you imagine my playing such a part in a foreign tongue?"

"Oh, she's a Pole, and, like all her people, inherits the gift of tongues."

"Well, you have not inherited the quality of justice," I petulantly answered.

"You see," he went on, "I had been helping them at rehearsals. Yes, Sargent was very anxious to know my opinion of his new star. I was cold over a foreign experiment, but, by Jove! if you could have seen that woman act at rehearsal! Why, say, you think her superior to the ordinary leading woman, don't you?"

"Good heaven, man!" I cried, "did I not tell you she is a most remarkable woman and a true artist?"

"Well," he continued, "just the difference and superiority that you find between her and the general leading lady, is the difference and the superiority I find in her day-work over her night-work. Don't ask me to explain it—I cannot! Just one single instant at night she reached to the effect of the morning. At the defiance of the duchess——"

"Oh, I know!" I broke in. "You mean where *Adrienne* stands left of stage, and with head up, eyes gleaming and her contemptuously curled lips showing her white teeth—" (he nodded quickly); "she was a real figure of indomitable courage."

"Yes," he admitted, "that was superb; it was a great moment and the house thrilled to it—but at rehearsal the 'Two Pigeons' fable—well, it put a lump in my dry old throat. I've seen every *Adrienne* of note that has appeared in the last thirty years, and I suppose it's heresy to say it, but I think the mighty original, Rachel, gave the fable too tragic

a tone, bore down too heavily upon that one note; though later on in the play——" He lifted his hands high and bowed his head in reverence. "And the golden-voiced one of Paris to-day reads the fable delightfully. But that morning's reading of the Polish actress—by Jove! To a perfect method of delivery she added dignity and pathos, a most unusual combination that, either on the stage or in real life! For when real feeling arrives, dignity generally departs. I said to Sargent: 'You're right, my boy; you have found a crown-jewel! If it can shine like this by day, what will gas-light do for it?' Yet that same speech broke my heart at night."

"Your heart!" I cried. "You haven't got one to break!"

He grinned amiably. "Oh, yes, I have," he said, "—an artistic one. And it's tender, too. But are you by chance acquainted with this good lady you are putting up your hands for so readily?"

"No, I do not know her" (that pleasure came later on), "and the public will put up its hands for her quickly enough, for, mark you, Mr. Boucicault, she is going to be that card to bank on—a woman's favourite!"

"From the lips of babes and sucklings——" he jeered.

"Oh, I don't know!" I responded. "I guess I've been weaned—at least from prejudice."

"Boucicault, you had better let her alone," laughed Colonel Piatt.

"As you seem to speak from a painful experience, I'll be warned in time. But I'm not through yet with that play and player. The piece is as artificial as a bunch of tissue-paper roses."

"But," I interjected, "it gives splendid opportunities to an actress."

"Egad, it had to give chances for acting if any one hoped to get Rachel into the play."

Rather hesitatingly, I remarked, "It always seemed to me, the death scene was too long—for nature, at least."

"Ah!" he cried, excitedly, "you're a joy to a man's heart! For nature, is it? Yes, and for art, too. Never rack your audience. Touch 'em—thrill 'em—chill 'em—but never s-t-r-a-i-n 'em!" He dragged the word "strain" out with real effect. "The death scene, if indifferently played, is too long. If perfectly played, it is too damnably long for human endurance! And it was right there you frowned the hardest, too, my Rose! Now, was that all for the play, or part for the acting?"

"Colonel Piatt," I said, "this man hungers and thirsts for a disparaging word about a truly noble performance."

"But not absolutely perfect, eh?" broke in Boucicault. "Come now, no performance can be that, because humanity cannot attain perfection. Why, I'm an extra-good actor myself, yet you can find some slight blemishes in my work. Even a great poet may——"

"My dear man, you are too modest. You do

yourself a cruel wrong. Who could criticise the art of a Boucicault?" I mockingly demanded.

"At all events," declared Colonel Piatt, "one never nods when Boucicault acts."

"A-ah, Colonel, I'll come to your wake for that!" said the grateful one.

"Don't," pleaded the other. "If you have a grudge against me, take your revenge now. A man does not need to be an actor to want to hold the centre of the stage at his last appearance on earth—so just send regrets and don't wake me."

Boucicault looked hurt. "Well, as you like," he sighed. Then to me: "I'm always at my best when waking a man that's shared good tobacco and liquor with me. And now you'll be comforting me with the explanation of that frown!"

"Oh, good mercy!" I cried, "how you do badger one! The only fault I saw in the newcomer's playing of *Adrienne*—which in all probability was wholly due to first-night anxiety—was this: That that long agony, those physical tortures resulting from an irritant poison, those dreadful recoveries from collapse and spasm, that wore her out bodily—they still left her splendid voice clear and fairly full and expressive of love to the last. Now, the voice dies as surely as the rest of the body. And this brilliant stranger within our gates probably knows that quite as well as we do. I have seen very few *Adriennes,* compared with your amazing list, but one of them, a German"—he twisted up his face and gave a pro-

testing little groan—"oh, wait a moment, please; this actress happened to bear the name of Seebach."

"I beg your pardon," he interrupted, contritely.

"Beg hers!" I said, sharply.

"I do—I beg Marie's pardon, for she was a brilliant actress."

"Well," I went on, "in that act she was the most pitiful scrap of humanity, and somehow she gave you the impression that her greatest agony was mental. The parting from her love seemed more awful than parting from dear life. And her voice roughened, became husky, and at the last was a mere thread—it waned as her strength waned. And when it was all ended, what on earth she did to herself I can't imagine, but as she lay huddled in the depth of that big chair, her poor shrunken little body looked no larger than a child's of twelve years." Dreading a satirical laugh, I went on. "Of course, I knew she could not have contracted and shrivelled away like that, but if a true magician makes us see what does not exist, why may not an intensely sensitive and sincere actor do the same?"

"Oh!" answered Boucicault, lightly, "people often read beauties into an actor's work that he never thought of himself."

"Well, even so, must there not be first some potent, magnetic power in the actor to arouse the dormant imagination of the spectator to these conceptions?"

"By all the saints in the calendar!" he exclaimed,

excitedly, "you woolly little Westerner, I believe you've answered one of my oldest puzzles! Piatt, I've seen men—clever men, mind you—sit through the same performance of the only Rachel and come forth with astonishingly different conceptions of the character she had so splendidly portrayed before them. One would see in it the very quintessence of polished evil, the other find it an uplifting personification of noble tragedy. One woman would weep over her as a suffering victim, while another would shrink from her as she would from a jewelled flask of deadly poison. And I used to puzzle over it all—and here this creature, that never saw the frail giantess, gives me the cue. She awakened their imagination and each one saw her work through the medium of his own individuality—What the devil do you want, boy? A-ah, don't mind him, Rose!" (as I started violently at the sight of the call-boy at my door)—"Go on!" said my visitor, commandingly, "tell them to play another overture!"

"Do nothing of the kind," I countermanded. "I'm ready—call the act—and go on."

Mr. Boucicault turned to his companion, saying: "And she with such a hospitable look on her face! Would you have thought it of her—turning a pair of well-meaning old chaps out of doors?"

"If you were the manager——" I began.

"Well, I'm not," he laughed.

"Where's your golden rule?" I sternly inquired.

"The divil a bit of me knows! I could never live by rule, golden or otherwise!"

"Boucicault," cried Colonel Piatt, "you haven't told so many truths in a month of Sundays!"

"Why not follow my example, Colonel? You used to be fond of a rare experiment in the old days."

"Everybody ready!" called the boy outside.

Pausing at the doorway, which was two steps up from the stage-level, my actor visitor looked off across the stage. "Ah," he commented, "that's a good-looking juvenile woman you have there, but she should change her dressmaker. Her body—or waist, as you call it in America—is ruined by her 'darts.' They are too high and too close, and push her figure all out of shape. She didn't look so bad as that in the first act, when those infernal 'darts' were shorter. When a woman's dress can be built without them, the world will have rolled a good way toward the millennium."

For this wonderful man—who at nineteen had written "London Assurance," a play that simply will not die, even when battered by the blows of amateurs—this same actor-author, knew every trick, device or secret of stage beauty. Too many women had he discovered, trained and presented to the public not to appreciate the value of a perfect line or curve; not to shrink from the tragedy of a too high, uppushing dart, or an exaggerated and unnatural coiffure.

I did not go on till the middle of the scene, so my visitors took leisurely leave. Mr. Boucicault had paid me a very gracious compliment, which I told him I valued greatly as coming from the author of

"London Assurance"—at which he gave a shrug of his shoulders and a contemptuous sniff, that made Colonel Piatt say quickly: "My dear Boucicault, you're not going to have the affectation to depreciate the fine old play whose fame will outlast all your money-winners?"

"Why, how can you expect me to have a tender feeling for the play the critics use as a sort of gad to whale me with, every time I make a failure?" asked the actor-author, with assumed indignation.

"Failure?" asked Piatt. "I did not know you ever made a failure."

I could feel my smile approaching the dimensions of a grin, and quickly Mr. Boucicault exclaimed, "Well, you know of one, Rose—judging from your Cheshire-cat expression, I think you do."

And I modestly confessed, "I have played *Jezebel*—in your play by that name, sir."

"Oh, God be good to us!"—and he took his head between his hands and groaned—"but that was the grand failure! But I can never do much when I try to write to order. That was for Charles Mathews and his wife. Well, laugh if you like, and I don't mind laughing with you, for there's not a part in the play either one of 'em could act. Well, whenever I do a light bit of work the critics cry aloud and haul up 'London Assurance'—the brilliant promise of my youth—and point out its superiority over the feeble and meretricious productions of my maturity. It's always by the 'Assurance' they prove to the public the disappointment I am!"

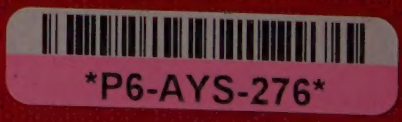
"Well," I broke in, "sneer at the critics—not at 'London Assurance,' which must have been a vitally true picture of life, because when presented to-day, after all the years past, it is neither out of drawing nor too highly coloured—its vitality seems to be the vitality of truth. Now look at 'The Lady of Lyons,' three years older—put that play on in modern dress and it would instantly become a superb burlesque. Everything in it seems so unnatural, so artificial!"

"Humph!" ejaculated Mr. Boucicault. "It was an unnatural and artificial picture of life when Bulwer made it."

I fairly clapped my hands for satisfaction. "Ah, you can afford to be proud of the ever-youthful, because ever-truthful, 'London Assurance.'"

"Piatt, is my head turned around entirely?" he asked. But he squeezed my fingers hard and tapped the back of my hand kindly all the time. "It's an honest little porcupine," he smiled, "that sets up its quills alike in defence of the just and the unjust! I must go—must I? Well, I always accept a dismissal without argument—though it would have been no killing matter to give me that second overture. Piatt, if you hold her hand any longer it will cost her a dollar stage-wait! Good-by, Rose Chéri!" And Mr. Boucicault and his friend turned toward the front of the house.

THE END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